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The Beaver

CANADA'S HISTORY MAGA

February | March 2009

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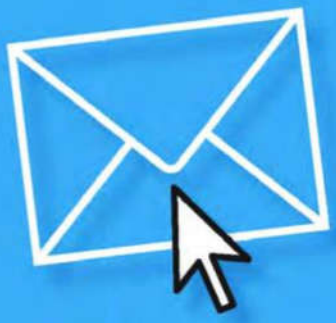

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The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

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Canada

The wonder years

It's been a full century since the townsfolk of Baddeck, Nova Scotia, gathered in their excitement to cheer Douglas McCurdy as he coaxed the *Silver Dart* into the sky. Much has changed in those 100 years. We've reached higher and farther than those early aviators could ever have dreamed. And yet we've lost something too.

On a recent flight, I found myself in the security lineup engaged in an all-too-familiar drill: Empty pockets of anything remotely metallic; place laptop in the plastic bin; head through airport scanner — and then wait for the inevitable beep.

Later, about two hours after takeoff, I turned away from the inflight movie and glanced outside. Set high above a mattress of dark, rolling clouds was the moon, fuller and sharper than I could remember. I stole a quick look around the cabin to see if anyone else was sharing this sight. Most were not. Headphones on, eyes fixed straight ahead, passengers sat oblivious to the beauty outside their windows.

THOMAS FRICKE

It wasn't always like this.

In this issue, we mark the 100th anniversary of flight in Canada with a quartet of stories that take us back to times and eras in which flying, for many, was still the stuff of dreams.

Our first story, by Charlotte Gray, puts a human face on the historic *Silver Dart* flight of 1909. Gray reveals what drove Alexander Graham Bell to create the airplane, as well as the role his wife, Mabel Bell, played in the *Dart*'s success. We then move forward to the late 1920s to explore the early days of air tourism in Canada. By then, writes Danielle Metcalfe-Chenail, flying had ceased to be a novelty; increasingly, it was becoming a luxury for rich travellers seeking remote wilderness playgrounds. Next, we visit the late 1950s to mark a not-so-happy milestone — the fiftieth anniversary of the cancellation of the Avro Arrow. Writer Allan Britnell introduces us to Lou Wise — Avro's former head of film and photography — who, by disobeying direct orders, saved a valuable visual archive for future generations. Finally, we jet off to the 1970s with Captain Gordon A.A. Wilson, a former Canadian Air Force pilot who invites us into the secret world of electronic air warfare and tells the story of the daring pilots who patrolled the Cold War skies over Canada.

There's a common theme that runs through all these stories. They each feature daring souls who pushed the boundaries of what was possible.

Take Alec Bell, for instance. Born in 1847, he became one of the brightest stars of the Age of Invention. The telephone? Powered, heavier-than-air flight? All thought to be impossible — until Bell helped make them a reality.

Today, we live in the Information Age and anything seems possible. Thanks to Google and its like, any fact, any byte of data is a mere mouse click away. Microchips, plasma screens, hand-held computers — technology leaps forward on a daily basis. And yet, amid all this technological innovation and instant information, it seems nothing surprises us anymore. The magical has become the mundane.

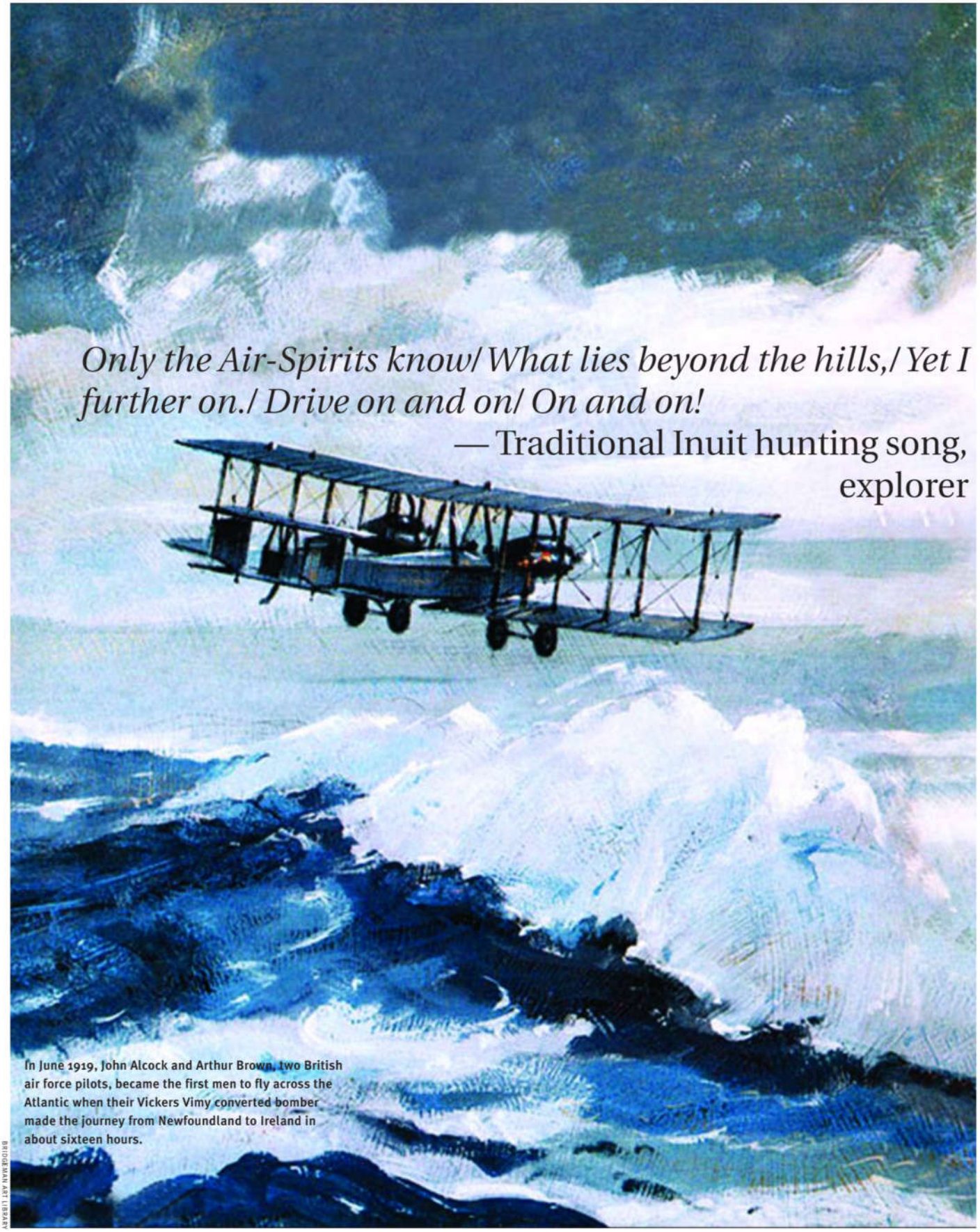
Perhaps the price of all this progress is an inevitable loss of wonder.

I hope not. I hope that through these stories we can all recapture a little of that sense of awe that propelled earlier generations to reach for the skies.

Mark Reid

Mark Reid, Editor
editors@historysociety.ca

COVER: CORBIS



Only the Air-Spirits know/ What lies beyond the hills,/ Yet I further on./ Drive on and on/ On and on!

— Traditional Inuit hunting song, explorer

In June 1919, John Alcock and Arthur Brown, two British air force pilots, became the first men to fly across the Atlantic when their Vickers Vimy converted bomber made the journey from Newfoundland to Ireland in about sixteen hours.

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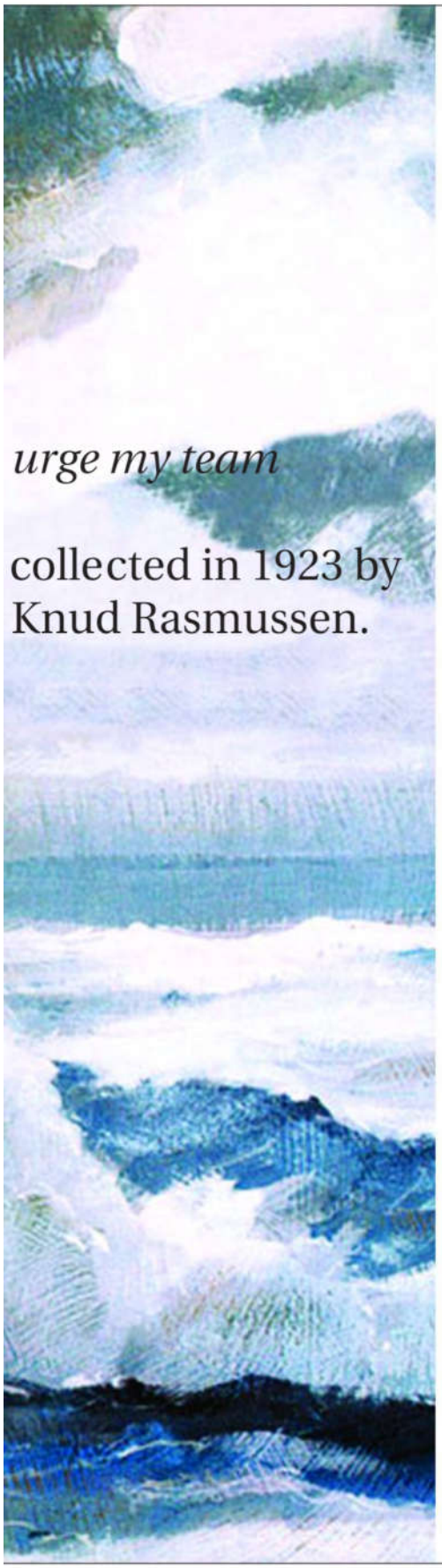

The Beaver

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Letters

The true founder?

Bravo to *The Beaver* and author Patrick Donovan for the excellent article disclosing the valuable contributions made to this nation by Pierre Dugua de Mons ["In the Shadow of Champlain," December/January 2009] in spearheading the founding of settlements in Acadia and Quebec.

In our 2007 book titled *Louis Hébert and Marie Rollet: Canada's Premier Pioneers*, we wrote that de Mons' "prior essential role in spearheading the founding of Quebec has not received the attention it deserves." It was de Mons who hired Champlain to go to Quebec for that purpose and we added, "Champlain on his own could not have accomplished this historical achievement."

We also wrote:

"It was not until the latter half of the 1800s, over two hundred years after his death, that people in Canada started referring to him [Champlain] as the 'Father of New France.'"

In extolling Champlain, the significance of de Mons in the history of New France has not received the prominence to which it is entitled.

GEORGE AND TERRY GOULET
CALGARY

Canada's champagne

I had to chuckle when I read the short on Canada Dry by Beverley Tallon ["Our home & native..." December/January 2009]. My wife and I just returned from a wonderful holiday in Egypt, where I received so many compliments on my "Canada" baseball cap. The Egyptians would cheer "Eh Canada Dry ... good country ... etc." Apparently Canada Dry is one of the favourite drinks in Egypt and John McLaughlin is to be congratulated, not only for his drink but also for making Canada very popular.

Because of this experience, I feel that I must carry on the tradition in Canada and my next drink at the mall has got to be a Canada Dry.

Thanks,
JOHN PERKOVICH
BURLINGTON, ONTARIO

A creative bunch

A footnote to Canada Dry Ginger Ale ["Our home & native ..." December/January 2009]: John J. McLaughlin was the older brother of George and Sam McLaughlin who transformed their father's carriage works into General Motors of Canada. A talented family!

HEATHER ROBERTSON
KING CITY, ONTARIO

Paths to gold

Congratulations to Forrest Pass on finding Archibald Thompson's letters among Mark Wade's papers in the Kamloops Archives. ["The Road to Riches," October/November 2008.]

My great-aunt Margaret Peebles married one of the Overlanders, Archibald McNaughton, and published in 1896 *Overland to Cariboo: an eventful journey of Canadian pioneers to the goldfields of British Columbia in 1862*. Aunt Maggie's adventures, much embellished, were among the tales of my youth, and my story-telling aunt Joan Peebles gave me her signed copy of the book.

This piece of my family history became the base for my own series of four books in Penguin Canada's "Our Canadian Girl Series", beginning with the Overlanders' arduous trek (*Lisa, Book 1, Overland to Cariboo*). Lisa, my hero, is an adopted daughter of the only family among the 150 men. Indeed, I borrowed a piece of Thompson's story — where he was marooned in the rapids of the Thompson River en route to Fort Kamloops. However, in my fiction, it was Lisa's raft that was dashed on the rocks, and she and her younger brother had to be rescued (by canoe) by Andrew Hole.

Thank you for adding this footnote to the story, as well as reprinting some of William Hind's splendidly evocative art. I enjoyed the article.

PRISCILLA GALLOWAY PH.D.,
NÉE PEEBLES
PENETANGUISHENE, ONTARIO

Picture perfect

Your album entry ["On top of the world"] in the October/November 2008 issue of *The Beaver* is of great interest to me for I graduated as a forest engineer from UBC in 1941 and returned there to teach from 1948 to 1961. During those 13 years Dr. J.E. Bier [who took the above-mentioned photo of the topping of a spar-tree] was a friend, a neighbour, and a colleague of mine.

Moreover, Dr. Clifford Riley used to regale us with a story of his encounter with a grizzly bear while he was working the Kootenays. In those days there were no summer research assistants,

so forest researchers often depended on their wives to assist them in their fieldwork!

One day, their day's work completed, Cliff Riley and his wife returned to their convertible two-seater [which they had left with the top down] to find a grizzly bear ensconced therein! Cliff enthralled us with a description of the manoeuvres they resorted to in order to get that bear out of their car, for it was quite content with whatever it had discovered in the car!

To view a photo taken by an old colleague of mine at UBC — and to learn the son of another person I knew submitted it — was much more than I expected in one issue of my favourite publication, *The Beaver*!

JOHN W. KER
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

Beaver memories

When I arrived in Canada in April 1966, I looked for a job in Winnipeg. I found one working as a receptionist for The Canadian Committee of Traders into Hudson's Bay [Hudson's Bay House]. I was also "*The Beaver* Girl." I looked after subscriptions to *The Beaver* and also helped the editor, Ms. Malvina Bolus. What a wonderful lady. I learned so much about Canada from her and indeed met so many of the amazing contributors to *The Beaver*.

My best friend Cecille Bedard and I would explore the basement and attic at HB House where all of the back issues of *The Beaver* were stored. We were a young born-and-bred French Canadian, and a young, fresh-from-England girl, absolutely fascinated by the work we were doing.

I have many great memories and mementoes of my time spent there.

So, please start my new collection of memories, along with my subscription.

CAROLE-ANN WYANT
REGINA

B.C. saviour

I've been a reader of *The Beaver* for some fifty years and as a fan of Matthew Baillie Begbie I was distressed to note his absence in your British Columbia Chronology [October/November 2008 - page 39].

He's the guy who saved B.C. for Canada from the hordes of Yankee miners who were swarming into the colony.

Why was he left out?

WILLIAM L. PUTNAM
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

[British Columbia has been home to many notable people who made remarkable contributions to history. We regret we did not have space to list them all.]

Sea-to-sea

I agree with your picture of the last spike of the railway in Canada ["10 Photos that Changed Canada," August/September 2008], and also of Terry Fox, but I think the picture of René Lévesque on the evening of October 15, 1976, should be recognized.

Also, *The Beaver* has a penchant for the "British imprint on North America."

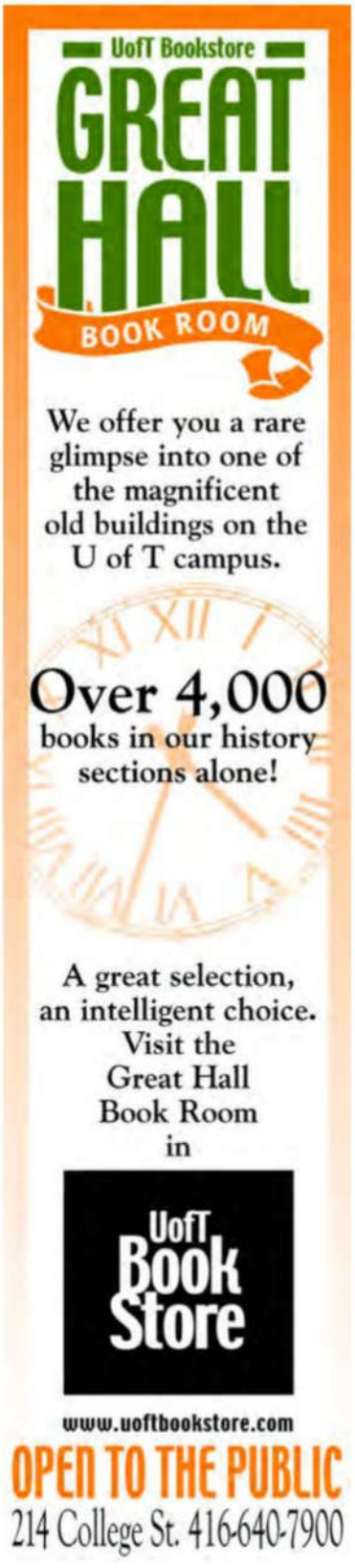
I would like to see coverage from one ocean, to another, to another.

Canada was born from the St. Lawrence Valley and Acadia, and like a spider web, spread across the continent.

In review, *The Beaver* must reflect the Canadian character and not just the British of our great country.

SOLANGE COSSETTE
VIA EMAIL

The Beaver welcomes readers' comments. E-mail us at editors@historysociety.ca or write to *The Beaver*, PO Box 56060, Portage Place RPO, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0G9 Canada. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.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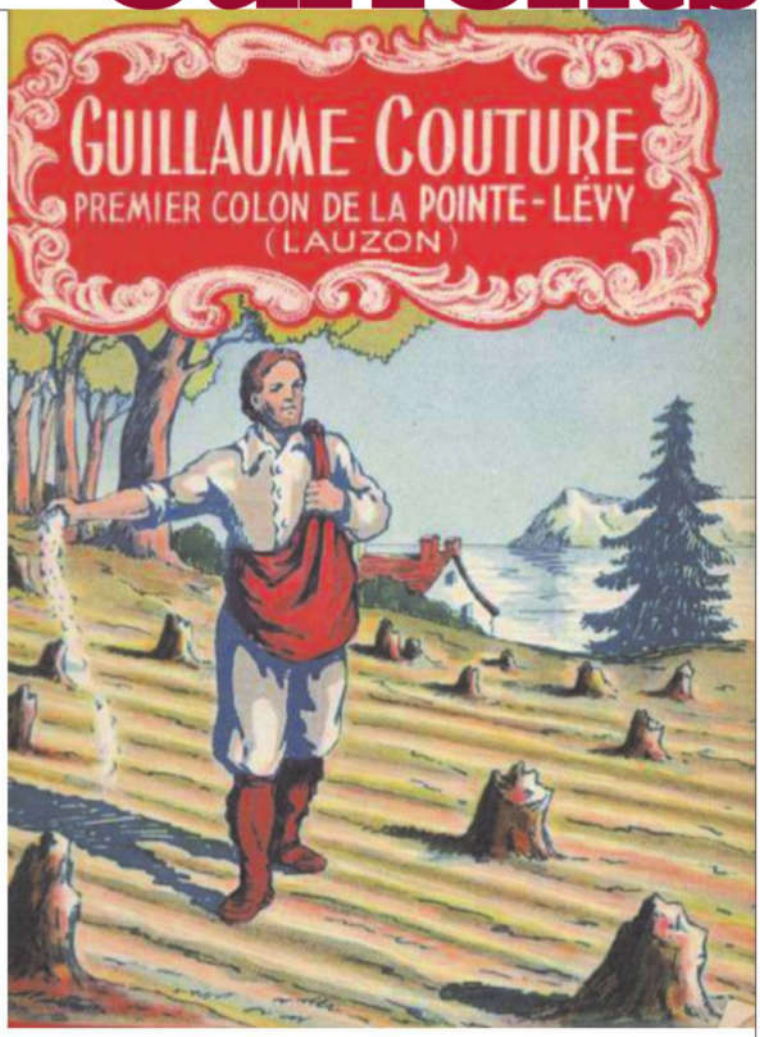
CA

Calm Air

Our Roots grows on



OUR ROOTS

An ambitious project to make local histories across Canada available online now boasts more than 5,500 books and up to 1.3 million digitized pages.

Our Roots, available free for anyone to use, contains texts ranging from an 1885 *Catechism of the History of Newfoundland: with an introductory chapter on the discovery of America by the ancient Scandinavians* to a 1947 book about Pointe-Levy, Quebec's first colonist, Guillaume Couture.

Begun as a small project in 2000, Our Roots ballooned into a national network of libraries, academic institutions, and other organizations, becoming one of the most popular local history sites on the web. In 2008, it completed a major augmentation of its French-language texts.

While there are no current plans to launch another major phase of development, Our Roots continues to grow, albeit more slowly, says project manager Sheila Dennis.

"We do get suggestions for additions, and we are still adding titles here and there," she says. "We have a phrase we use around here: 'Our Roots will never die.'"

Our Roots is a partnership between the University of Calgary and l'Université Laval, with support from Canadian Heritage and other institutions.

— Nelle Oosterom

February 19

To remember the day in 1732 when convents in New France were prohibited from harbouring deserters and fugitives. Break the habit.

Currents

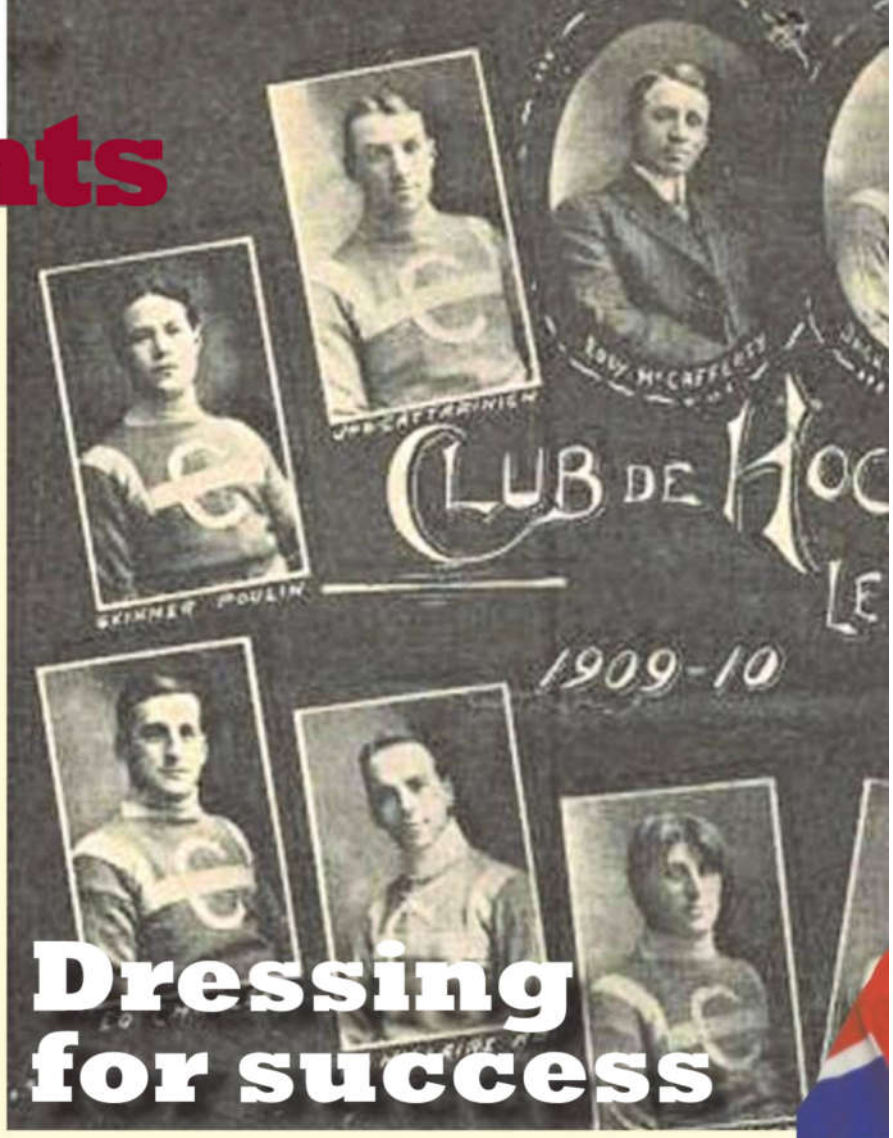
Our home & native ...

The Paint Roller

Norman Breakey thought his path would be painted with gold when he invented and patented the paint roller in Toronto in 1940. Breakey, who was born in Pierson, Manitoba, predicted the paint roller would revolutionize the industry and appeal to a large market of do-it-yourself devotees.

His ingenious device would take much of the time-consuming work out of painting and allow workers to cover large flat surfaces efficiently. In its simplest form, the paint roller was a cylinder covered with fibrous material and free-turning wheels on either end. The axle hooked into a handle, allowing the user to pick up a large quantity of paint on the roller.

Breakey correctly predicted that the paint roller would be a huge success, but, being a man of simple means, he was unable to produce his innovation in large quantities. Breakey never realized the profit behind his invention — it was imitators who eventually benefited from his creation. **— Beverley Tallon**



Dressing for success

Hockey Hall of Fame celebrates NHL's oldest franchise

If you grew up in the shadow of the old Forum, perhaps you were lucky enough to meet them in person.

Fans living in farther-flung parts of Canada had to content themselves with grainy flashes of brilliance on their television sets and those immortal words — which for their opponents were shouted all too often — "*C'est le but ! C'est le but du Canadiens !*"

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the creation of the Montreal Canadiens hockey club. Whether you are a diehard supporter, or even (gasp) a Maple Leafs fan, there's no denying the iconic status of this Original Six hockey team, the oldest and most successful in the league.

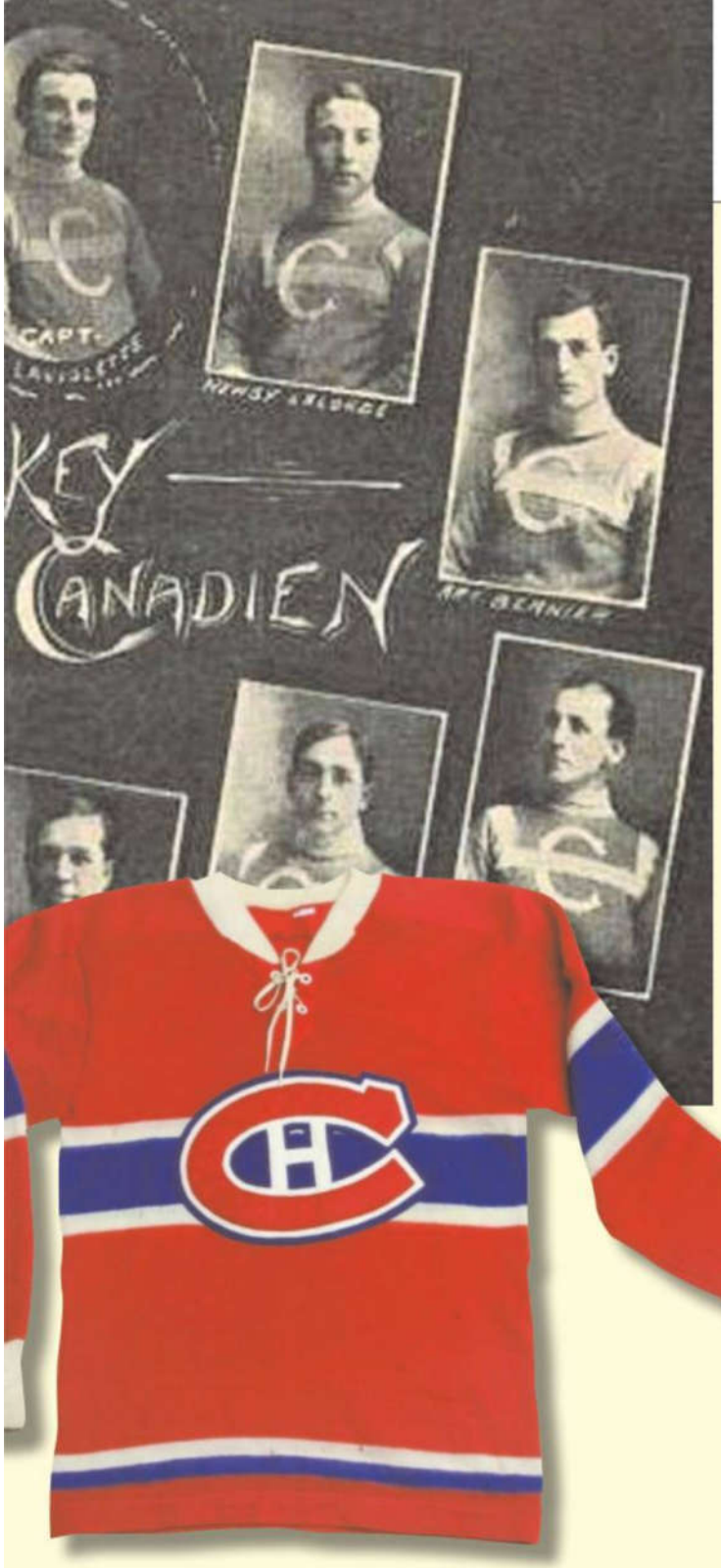
"They are a very, very storied franchise," says Kelly Masse, spokeswoman for the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. "You can't deny they are a very historic team."

February 23

To celebrate the day in 1906 that the world heavyweight boxing title was won by Canada's Tommy Burns. At 5 foot 7 inches, he was the smallest champ ever. Swing low.

March 10

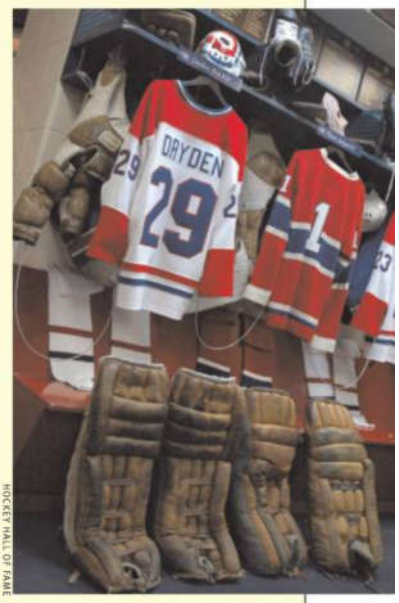
To note that on this day in 1960 amendments were introduced to let on-reserve aboriginal women and men vote in federal elections without losing tax exemptions. Sharpen your pencils.



And while the old Forum has since been replaced by a larger, slicker facility, it's still possible to relive the memories of those earlier days when the famed *bleu-blanc-et-rouge* captured a league-leading twenty-four Stanley Cups.

The Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto — itself a shrine for worshippers of the game — is playing host to a special exhibit celebrating 100 years of Canadiens hockey.

New items have been added to the hall's existing, and immensely popular, replica of the old Habs dressing room. For Canadiens fans, the replica dressing room — which features jerseys and artifacts from the team's past — is like a slice of heaven.



HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

Some liken professional hockey to "war on ice." Perhaps that's why the Canadiens painted a passage from John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" on their dressing room wall. The line, written in both English and French, reads: "to you from failing hands we throw the torch; be yours to hold it high."

The refurbished replica dressing room is just part of a larger Canadiens centennial exhibition. A central hall, for instance, celebrates the greatest of the Canadiens' greats. On a video monitor, interviews with former players are interspersed with scenes of past glories.

Nearby sits a treasure trove of Habs artifacts. Here you'll find Gump Worsley's goalie pads, the puck shot by Maurice "Rocket" Richard to score his record-setting 500th goal, and even the battered black suitcase Frank "The Big M" Mahovlich used throughout his playing days from the 1950s to 1970s. Of course, there are also tributes to the Canadiens dynasties that captured multiple Cups in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s.

Masse says the special centennial exhibit will be on display for about a year, and that so far it has been a big hit.

"It's been really well received," she said. "There are lots and lots of Habs fans in Toronto."

— Mark Reid

March 20

To observe the day in 1964 when British Columbia became the first province to prohibit workplace discrimination based on advanced age. Extend your benefits.

March 31

To mark the day in 1841 that HBC governor George Simpson embarked on a twenty-month around-the-world trip. Pack light.

By the numbers

Bishop Laval

It was 350 years ago in April that François de Laval boarded a ship and set sail for New France to take up his post as the vicar apostolic of the fledgling French colony. The energetic church father would eventually become the first bishop of Quebec and would build the foundation of the Catholic Church in Canada.

37 The age of Laval when he arrived in Quebec in June of 1659.

27 The number of ecclesiastics, such as Jesuits and Sulpicians, who awaited him in Quebec.

30 The number of new parishes created by Laval. There were five when he arrived in New France.

1674 The year Quebec became a diocese, officially making Laval the Bishop of Quebec.

1,000 Bishop Laval's guaranteed annual salary, in livres. By comparison, a skilled labourer of that time earned about 900 livres a year, a high-ranking official 2,400 livres.

2,000 The French population of Canada in 1659.

368,709 The population today of the city of Laval, near Montreal, named after the famous bishop.

An idea born

Women weave history of Newfoundland's French Shore.

Creating a historic tapestry of a size and scope similar to that of the Bayeux Tapestry did not seem like such an audacious idea to Newfoundlander Joan Simmonds — until she saw the original in France.

"I thought to myself, are we crazy to think we could do anything of that magnitude?" Simmonds recalled of seeing the 900-year-old masterpiece depicting the events leading up to the Norman invasion of England. "It was totally awesome."

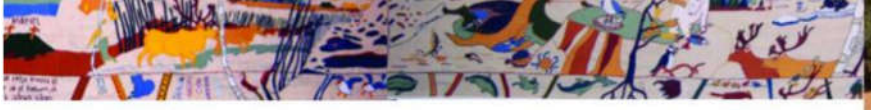
Simmonds' visit to France in 2005 came after she and a few other women from Conche, a tiny community near the tip of Newfoundland's Northern Peninsula, hatched a plan to create a tapestry depicting the history of the province's French Shore.

COURTESY FRENCH SHORE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

They were inspired by French-born artist Jean Claude Roy and his wife Christina Roy, who spent an artists' retreat in Conche in 2004.

"While he was here painting, his wife was working on an embroidery kit of the Bayeux Tapestry," says Simmonds. "You get to chatting and one thing leads to another, and one of the ladies said wouldn't it be great to do something like that for Newfoundland."

The result is a collaboration between Jean Claude Roy and the ladies from Conche. Roy provides drawings on paper of historical events, which are photographed, projected onto stretched linen, and traced in pencil. While the half-dozen women involved were initially



in the Bayeux

a little nervous about making mistakes, Simmonds says they have now hit their stride.

So far, they are about halfway done. The work will be about sixty-one metres long — the Bayeux is seventy metres long — and fifty centimetres high when finished. The first panels show animal life and early aboriginal culture. They then move on to events such as the arrival of the Vikings and the coming of Basque fishermen in the early 1500s.

The material in the tapestry is Jacobean linen from Scotland — a long-lasting natural fibre. And after much trial and error, they found

a sturdy woolen yarn from England known as Appleton crewel, which doesn't break when pulled through the linen.

When completed, probably by 2010, the tapestry will be put on display at the French Shore Interpretation Centre in Conche. The women also hope to send it on tour across Canada, and even to Europe.

The French Shore refers to areas where French fishermen were allowed to catch and dry fish — but not to settle — after the British took control of Newfoundland in 1713.

The French presence in Conche is now long gone — most people in this isolated community are of Irish descent.

— Nelle Oosterom

These early panels depict the pre-contact history of Newfoundland's French Shore.

JOHN LYONS

Living History

Graves on the radar

When John Lyons began looking for some of his ancestors, he had no idea it would result in a search with ground-penetrating radar.

Lyons knew one side of his family was descended from Conrad Bongard, a Hessian soldier. Two centuries ago, some of Lyons' ancestors were buried at Rose Cemetery at Waupoos in Prince Edward County, Ontario.

His antecedents are some of the forty original settlers — Hessian and Dutch mercenaries who were hired by the British in 1798 to fight in the American Revolution. The British king offered the soldiers land in Waupoos, and they established a Lutheran church settlement.

When Lyons visited the cemetery, he discovered that his ancestor's graves were unmarked — the simple wooden crosses that had memorialized them had deteriorated long ago.

After watching an episode of the British television show *Time Team*, in which geophysics equipment was used to locate underground antiquities, Lyons wondered if the same technology could be used to locate graves at Rose Cemetery.

He contacted professor Gerhard Pratt at Queen's University, who assigned graduate geology students Sarah de Jonge and Heather Wells to the project. Using ground-penetrating radar, a magnetometer, and other high-tech equipment, the students were able to locate and map a number of potential gravesites.

Stories of their work appeared in local newspapers, and the news spread from there. Lyons, an amateur genealogist, started fielding calls.

"Literally thousands of people can trace their ancestry from this one little cemetery," Lyons noted. "I am amazed at the far-reaching effects and have received calls from people as far away as Scotland wanting to know if they have any relatives in Rose."

However, the identity of the people buried there can only be determined if the graves are exhumed for DNA testing. Lyons is not sure if this will happen, but History Channel's *Ancestors in the Attic* has expressed interest in featuring Rose Cemetery if it does.

For now, he says, the graves will be marked "for practical purposes" so that they are not disturbed.

— Beverley Tallon

First

By 1909, inventor Alexander Graham Bell
chance to make history — and it was in the

CANADIAN PRESS

Flight

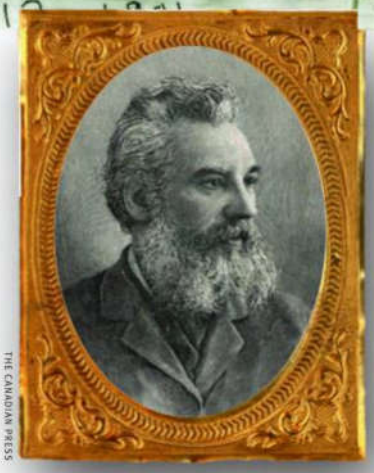
The *Silver Dart* is towed across the ice of Bras d'Or Lake.

was already yesterday's man. But he saw his unlikeliest of places. *by Charlotte Gray*

On February 23, 1909, the little biplane was wheeled onto the frozen surface of the Bras d'Or Lake, the huge inland sea in the middle of Cape Breton Island.

Practically every resident of the nearby fishing village of Baddeck was on the ice to watch. Children, who had been given the day off school, skated around the little plane in a frenzy of excitement. With mittened hands, townspeople stroked the wings, which were coated in silvery waterproof material, and then pulled their woolen coats tighter against the bitter winds. They had never seen anything like *this*. What would that crazy American inventor, Alexander Graham Bell, who had spent the past twenty-two summers in their midst, think of next?

CANADA AVIATION MUSEUM



THE CANADIAN PRESS

One of many prominent visitors to Beinn Bhreagh, Samuel P. Langley, secretary of the Smithsonian (above left), relaxes in the sun porch with Bell, Bell's daughter Daisy, and Bell's wife Mabel.

The pilot, Douglas McCurdy, climbed into the cockpit of the *Silver Dart* and the Bells' coachman, John McDermid, cranked the propeller of the impossibly flimsy construction of wire, canvas, and wooden struts. Once the engine started, Bell's various helpers pushed the plane along the ice on its tricycle wheels, followed by an enthusiastic crowd of well-wishers. McCurdy revved the engine, the *Silver Dart* gathered speed — and then lifted off and took to the air like a baby bird.

A grin of triumph crossed the bewhiskered face of Alexander Graham Bell, a benevolent sixty-two-year-old in tweed knickerbockers who watched the little plane carve a graceful loop through the clear winter air. At his side, Mabel Bell gripped Alec's hand. Having lost her hearing when she was five, Alec's fifty-two-year-old wife was oblivious to the crowd's cheers, but she knew this success meant everything to Alec. Thanks to him, McCurdy had made the first manned, heavier-than-air flight in Canada — and was the first British subject to make such a flight anywhere in the British Empire.

Once McCurdy had landed and taxied to safety, the Bells invited everybody back to the mansion they had built on a nearby headland, Beinn Bhreagh, for homemade sandwiches and raspberry juice.

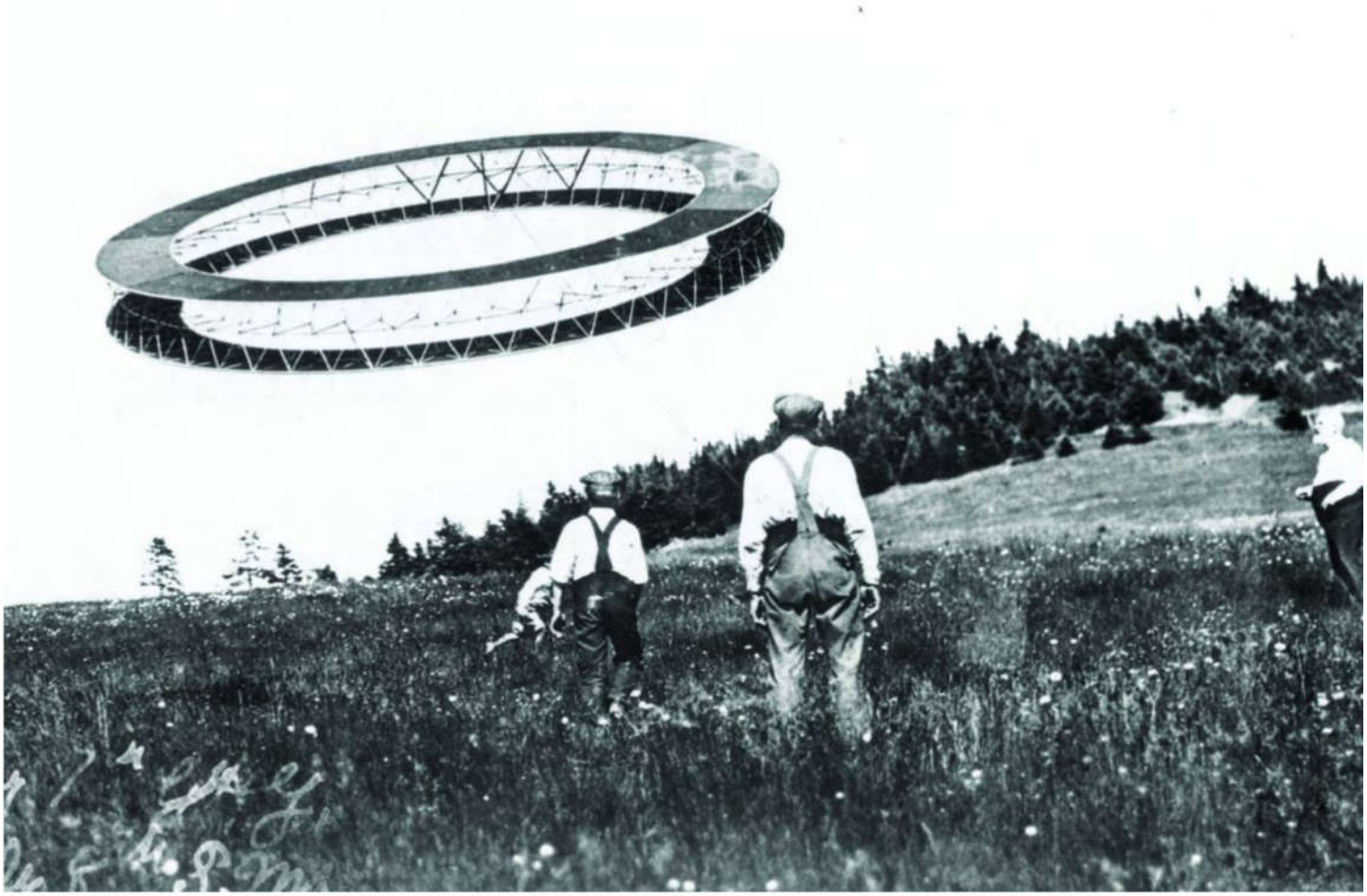
An unlikely launch site

This bit of history was set in the place dearest to Alec Bell's heart. Although he was an American citizen, he was born in Scotland in 1847 and had emigrated when he was twenty-three to the little Ontario manufacturing town of Brantford with his parents. He had moved on to Boston only a year later, but had maintained a deep affection for Canada and had spent summers in Nova Scotia since 1885. Cape Breton's rolling, pine-covered hills and Gaelic culture brought back happy memories for him of his Scottish childhood. No wonder he had insisted that one of the biplanes that he had helped build, and that his wife had financed, should be flown in Canada.

The flight of the *Silver Dart* over the Bras d'Or Lake that day was an extraordinary phenomenon — not so much for *when* it happened but for where. Cape Breton, in the northeastern corner of the Maritimes, was a long way from everywhere that young inventors congregated — the rapidly developing centres of technological innovation, such as Boston's Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or the growing pots of venture capital in financial centres like New York.

Whenever the Bells invited friends from Washington or Boston, their cosmopolitan visitors took at least three days to reach the magnificent summer home. Once there, they often felt cut off from "civilization." Atlantic storms could knock out telephone and telegraph services for up to a week. American newspapers were days old before they arrived in Baddeck.

It wasn't just that Alexander Graham Bell worked in the backwoods. By 1909, Bell himself was a throwback — an incorrigibly nineteenth-century figure.



Bell started with primitive little helicopters, then moved on to kites. He believed a powered kite was more stable than a biplane. Most observers were skeptical.

Bell and his helpers watch a large ring kite in flight.

An illustration of Alexander Graham Bell published in *Harper's Monthly* in 1895 (opposite page).

He remained the most famous inventor in the world thanks to the patent he had been granted in 1876 for "a speaking telegraph," but this great scientific breakthrough had originated in his intuition. Now, brilliant self-taught loners who tinkered in isolation were out of step with the accelerating pace of scientific discovery. In 1863, a total of 3,773 U.S. patents had been granted; by 1900, there were 24,000, and more were coming at the rate of a hundred every week. Bell's great rival, Thomas Alva Edison, had set up his own research and development facility, Menlo Park, in New Jersey, a short train ride from Manhattan. There, Edison and a battalion of chemists, engineers, and mathematicians worked on projects as diverse as movie cameras and improved electrical lighting.

Alec Bell had always preferred to keep his distance from either ruthless competitors like Edison or the Washington social round that his wife and two daughters enjoyed. He often tried to make his summer visit to Cape Breton last until Christmas.

However, his insistence on working alone, preferably in a little hut at Beinn Bhreagh, had not proved particularly productive. Since the invention of the telephone, he had played around with ideas as varied as water desalination, selective sheep breeding, and X-rays, but there had been no major new technologi-

cal breakthroughs. He grew increasingly frustrated by his lack of success: "I am not willing *to die* without completing some of the problems I have in hand," he wrote to his wife.

Then, in the mid-1890s, a new and exciting 'problem' caught his attention.

The race was on to build a powered flying machine that would take a human passenger. The competition was as intense as the race to invent a "speaking telegraph" had been thirty-five years earlier. Alexander Graham Bell wanted to be a player in this new game. He had, he told Mabel, "a bad attack of flying machines."

Bell started with primitive little helicopters, and then moved on to kites. He believed that a powered kite was safer and more stable than a biplane. He put together enormous circular or wedge-shaped constructions made of balsa wood and red silk. And he dreamed big:

"This machine," he told his wife, "may possibly be the father of a long line of vigorous descendants that will plough the air from Beinn Bhreagh to Washington! And perhaps revolutionize the world! Who can tell? Think of the telephone!"

PARKS CANADA

Douglas McCurdy at the controls of the *Silver Dart* during his early trials at Hammondsport, New York.

Most observers were skeptical. Bell's protégé, Helen Keller, confided to a friend, "Mr. Bell has nothing but kites and flying machines on his tongue's end. Poor dear man, how I wish he would stop wearing himself out in this unprofitable way." Even those who shared the vision of air travel regarded Bell's preoccupation with unwieldy kites, rather than biplanes, as misguided.

U.S.A: December 17, 1903. Orville Wright (American). Distance: 36.5 metres. Time: 12 seconds. Altitude: 3 metres.
France: October 22, 1906. Alberto Santos-Dumont (Brazilian). Distance: 60 metres. Time: 7 seconds. Altitude: 3 metres.
Distance (metres)
100
200

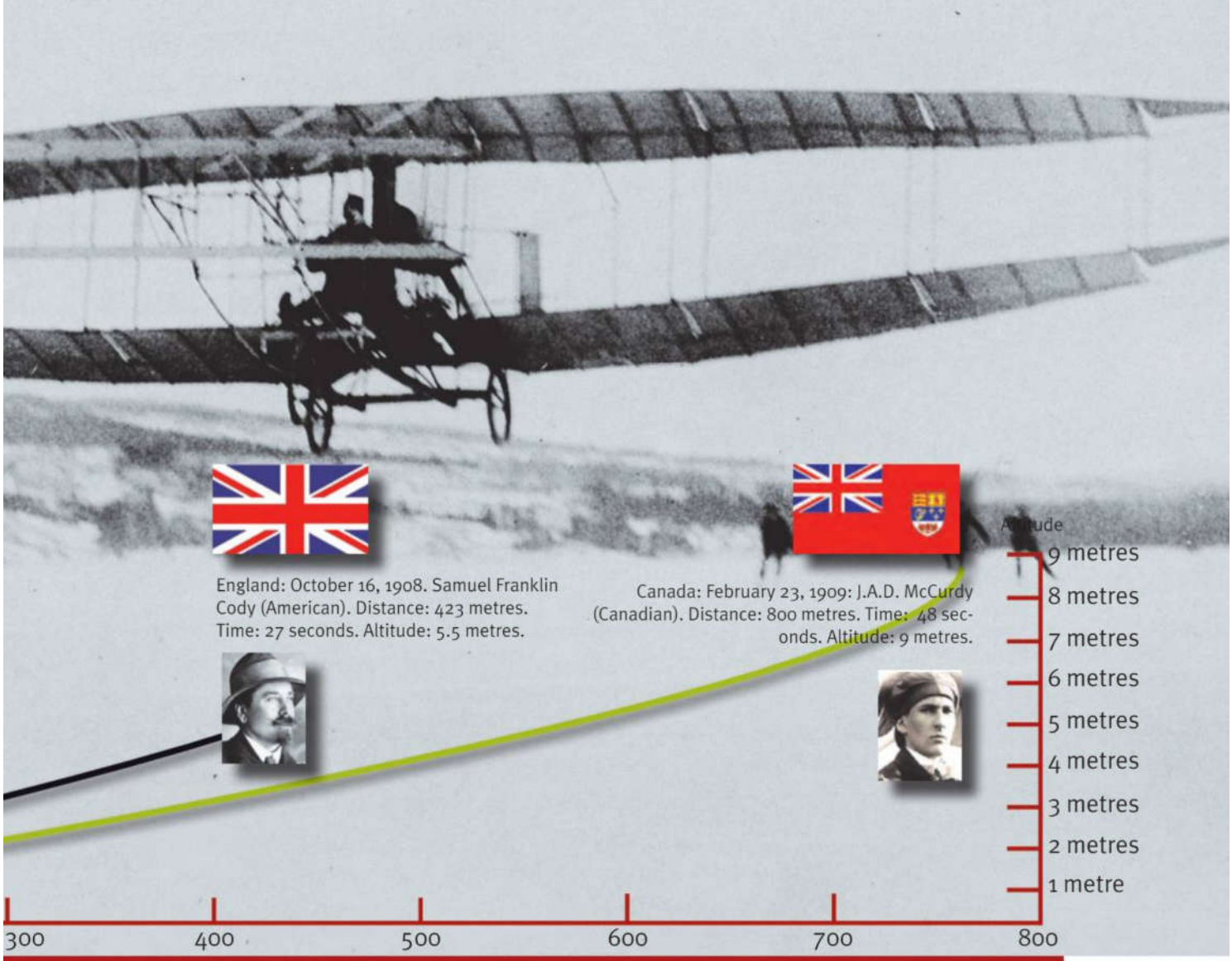
CANADIAN PRESS

REACH FOR THE

Mabel Bell, a pragmatic woman who knew her husband's obsessive personality better than anybody, realized that Alec needed the assistance of people who were on top of recent advances in mechanical and electrical engineering. His strength had always been conceptual thinking; his weakness was execution, for which he had relied on skilled craftsmen. Now he needed both craftsmen and educated technicians who could compensate for his lack of up-to-date technical know-how.

As early as 1899, Mabel quietly suggested to him that he might make faster progress with his kites if he had "six or eight thoroughly competent workmen in the Laboratory" at Beinn Breagh. "Why not try," she wrote, "to see if by having a lot of men you cannot advance into one month the (labours) of several."

Back then, Alec brushed the suggestion away. "You must remember that this is not a question of Invention but Discovery — and discovery is groping — a slow, laborious systematic groping after knowledge — disheartening, in the number of blind alleys explored."



SKY: THE EARLY AVIATORS

Above:
The *Silver Dart* over the ice on Baddeck Bay.

Then Alec Bell heard the first rumours that aviation science had already taken a giant leap forwards. A young bicycle mechanic called Orville Wright had made a successful manned flight in a powered biplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, three years earlier. Orville and his brother Wilbur, from Dayton, Ohio, had kept the flight secret, because they didn't want rivals stealing their technology.

Only when he knew where he was going, he told Mabel, "will be the time when I can follow your suggestion of half a dozen men or more in my laboratory."

However, in 1906, as the kites got even bigger and the job of building them more laborious, Mabel took it upon herself to find her husband some help. Working quietly behind the scenes, she started putting together a team.

One smart youngster was already working with Alec Bell in the summers: Baddeck-born Douglas McCurdy, son of Alec's long-time secretary Arthur McCurdy. Douglas McCurdy was a dark-haired, long-limbed fellow who had enrolled as an engineering student at the University of Toronto. Since childhood he had been like an adoptive son to the Bells, and now he spent his summers helping on the Beinn Bhreagh estate. In 1906, Mabel wrote to him and asked him to see if he could

recruit any of his fellow engineering students to accompany him to Baddeck for the summer. Douglas talked to a Toronto crony called Frederick Baldwin — known to all his friends, on the strength of his baseball abilities, as "Casey," after the poem "Casy at the Bat." The grandson of Sir Robert Baldwin, the famous pre-Confederation statesman, Casey combined the easy congeniality of an upper-crust Torontonian with a sportsman's enthusiasm for outdoor life. He immediately warmed to Bell and agreed to spend the winter working on another of Bell's projects: a seventy-foot tower constructed out of Alec's patented "tetrahedral cells" — pyramid-shaped units that were also used in the construction of the monster kites.

It was around this time that Alec Bell heard the first rumours that aviation science had taken a giant leap forward. He now realized he would have to move much faster if he was to stay in the game.

The Wright brothers' secret

The word was that a young bicycle mechanic named Orville Wright had made the first successful manned flight in a powered biplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, three years earlier, on December 17, 1903. Orville and his brother Wilbur, from Dayton, Ohio, had kept this and succeeding flights secret to keep rivals from stealing their technology.

Bell heard of the Wrights' extraordinary achievement while he was in Washington. He immediately rushed back to Cape Breton to share the news with McCurdy and Baldwin. Mabel Bell took an equally important step.

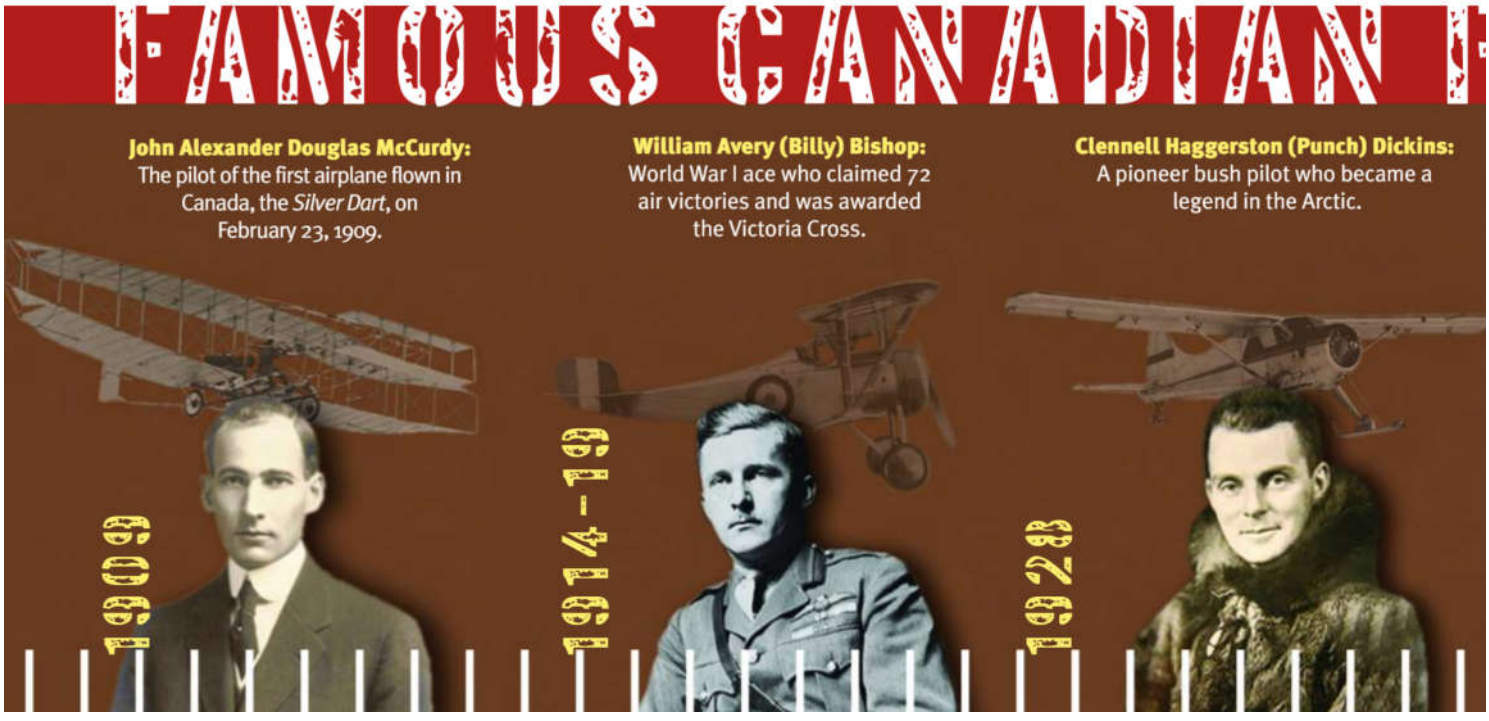
She persuaded her husband to ask the U.S. Armed Forces to dispatch Lieutenant Thomas E. Selfridge, a twenty-five-year-old graduate of West Point, to Beinn Breagh as an observer on the aviation experiments. Selfridge was an aviation enthusiast who was already fascinated by what Bell was doing.

Once Selfridge arrived, as Robert Bruce describes in *Bell: Alexander Graham Bell and the Conquest of Solitude*, "the lieutenant and the two engineers introduced a new precision to Bell's meticulously recorded but poetically calibrated measurements. Now wind velocity was read from an anemometer, not the look of the waves; altitude from a clinometer rather than the snapping of a manila rope or the pulling loose of a nailed cleat."

Within weeks, the fourth member of the team that would be known as "Bell's boys" had arrived. Glenn Curtiss, a motorcycle race champion who built light engines in Hammondsport, New York, came to Cape Breton to deliver an engine for one of the kites. He decided to stay.

Alec Bell now had four enthusiasts at his side. After dinner each evening, he would puff away at his pipe while the young men sketched out plans for flying machines. He would listen carefully, pointing out different ways of coming at a problem or suggesting refinements to their ideas. After the younger men had gone to bed, Alec would "put on his dressing gown," according to his valet, Charles Thompson, and "get his notebook and pen and settle down to work." He would still be working when Charles brought him coffee at 6 a.m., but then "he would retire, leaving his notebook open on his table." While their patron slept, the younger men would translate his drawings, sketches, and notes into prototypes and experiments.

This was just the kind of collaboration that Mabel had wanted for Alec: a group that would provide the structure, drive and skills to keep his experiments and spirits on the rails. So she offered the team a proposal: She had recently received $20,000 ($415,000 in today's currency) from the sale of a piece of property in Washington that she had inherited from her father, she announced. She wanted to put the group on a formal, legal footing by underwriting their expenses, construc-


FAMOUS CANADIAN F
John Alexander Douglas McCurdy:
The pilot of the first airplane flown in Canada, the Silver Dart, on February 23, 1909.
William Avery (Billy) Bishop:
World War I ace who claimed 72 air victories and was awarded the Victoria Cross.
Clennell Haggerston (Punch) Dickins:
A pioneer bush pilot who became a legend in the Arctic.
1909
1914 – 18
1928

tion materials, and salaries.

Douglas McCurdy and Casey Baldwin would each receive a salary of $1,000 a year. Curtiss, already an established businessman, would receive $5,000 a year while in Cape Breton and half that amount when away. Tom Selfridge would not receive a salary, since he was already on full pay as an army officer. Alec would serve as chairman without salary.

"My special function, I think," Bell decreed. "is the coordination of the whole — the appreciation of the important steps of progress and the encouragement of efforts in what seem to me to be advancing directions."

The Bells and the four young men travelled to Halifax to sign the Aerial Experiment Association agreement on October 1, 1907, in front of a notary and the American consul general. The A.E.A.'s goal, in the words of Tom Selfridge, was to get "into the air."

Bell's boys took up residence at Beinn Bhreagh Hall. They were now working with a new sense of urgency.

Changing direction

Bell remained enthusiastic about kites. But Baldwin and McCurdy in particular felt that kites offered insurmountable problems of control, speed, and wind resistance. Biplanes, they argued, were the way to go.

The young men's doubts depressed Bell. But in the end he graciously accepted the majority decision. Mabel wrote to her mother that Alec "is jolly again tonight, yesterday he said he was an old man."

The first biplane successes of Bell's team took place in the United States, where the boys had moved for the sake of warmer weather and proximity to Curtiss's Hammondsport machine shop. When Casey Baldwin flew a little biplane called Red Wing in March 1908, it was the first public demonstration of a powered, manned flying machine in North America.

The next successful prototype was *White Wing*, which incorporated movable wing tips, or ailerons, to ensure horizontal stability. And on the Fourth of July that year, the *June Bug*, built and piloted by Glenn Curtiss, scored the biggest triumph of all. It won the trophy for the first lengthy public flight, awarded by *Scientific American* magazine.

But a few months after the *June Bug*'s triumph, tragedy struck. All work on the Aerial Experiment Association's projects was temporarily halted due to the sudden death of Tom Selfridge on September 17, 1908.

Selfridge had volunteered to be Orville Wright's passenger on a U.S. army trial of Wright's latest plane: When the little aircraft nosedived into a parade ground, Selfridge had the melancholy distinction of becoming the first person to die in a plane crash. (Wright survived his injuries, but Bell never forgave him for Tom's death.)

Final triumph

Shaken by Selfridge's death, the group met in Washington shortly afterwards to decide on the future of the association, which had been set up to run for just one year. They voted to continue its work for another six months, which gave Douglas McCurdy time to work on *his* prototype, *Silver Dart*. It was flown more than ten times in Hammondsport then shipped to Cape Breton at the end of that year so that Bell could realize his intention of having at least one of the machines flown in Canada.

The biplane incorporated every piece of knowledge then available about aviation. By now, under Bell's guidance, "the boys" had cracked the technology required for the plane to fly in circles.

When he made his historic flight on February 23, McCurdy flew just under a kilometre at about sixty kilometres per hour, and then made a perfect landing.

"The *Silver Dart* was quite a heavy craft to perform

FLYERS
Janusz Zurakowski:
A World War II flying hero who became the chief test pilot of the Avro Arrow, Canada's first supersonic aircraft.
Rosella Marie Bjornson:
The first woman in North America to be hired as a pilot for a major airline — Transair.
Marc Garneau:
The first Canadian astronaut to go into space.
1959
1973
1984

BUT WILL IT FLY?

Rebuilding the Silver Dart on a wing and a prayer.

BJARNI TRYGGVASON

AEA 2005

Canadian astronaut Bjarni Tryggvason sets up a scale model of the *Silver Dart* to conduct wind tunnel tests. The second photo shows the replica built by the RCAF for the fiftieth anniversary.

A group of aviation enthusiasts from the Niagara Peninsula in Ontario is preparing to recreate Canada's first manned airplane flight at Baddeck, Nova Scotia, by flying a replica of the original craft.

The flight will be part of a year-long series of events celebrating the centennial of flight in Canada.

But the group faces numerous obstacles, not the least of which is that the original *Silver Dart* took off from the *frozen* surface of Baddeck Bay on Bras d'Or Lake a hundred years ago. Baddeck Bay rarely freezes over anymore.

"We figured we had about a fifteen per cent chance of actually pulling this off on February 23," says Doug Jermyn, president of Aerial Experimental Association 2005.

"But we found out that there is an inland bay nearby that does freeze over and we are thinking of locating it there."

If that doesn't work, Plan C is to stage it at the airport in Sydney, fifty kilometres away.

The other uncertainty is wind. The replica, like the original, is an unstable craft prone to going out of control in a strong breeze. The original flight took place on a relatively calm day.

History is not on their side either. The last time someone tried to recreate the 1909 flight — the RCAF on the fiftieth anniversary in 1959 — the replica *Silver Dart* crashed in the teeth of high winds and blowing snow.

Not surprisingly, the builders of this replica have made a few safety modifications. It has a modern engine, propeller, and pilot seat, as well as easier-to-control ailerons.

"Originally the pilot controlled the ailerons by moving his shoulders against a U-shaped thing that surrounded his shoulders like an oxen yolk," says Jermyn. "That's not something a modern pilot can get used to."

The volunteer-built replica has taken four years to construct and will cost at least $56,000 by the time the project is done.

The project has some historical names attached to it. One of the team members is Gerald Haddon, grandson of Douglas McCurdy, the pilot of the original *Silver Dart*.

But Haddon will not be flying it. That honour will go to Canadian astronaut Bjarni Tryggvason — a former payload specialist on the Space Shuttle *Discovery*.

And among those who will be looking on with keen interest when the attempt is made is Hugh Muller, none other than the great-grandson of Alexander Graham Bell. Muller, who, like his famous forebear, sports a big white beard, lives in Baddeck at the Bell ancestral home — Beinn Bhreagh — and has been a key figure in organizing the centennial celebrations.

— Nelle Oosterom

so well and so flawlessly," McCurdy wrote later. "And just to prove that the *Silver Dart*'s first flight in Canada was no mere stroke of luck, I took it up for another flight the next day, February 24, 1909, and flew for four and one half miles." He went on to make more than thirty flights across Bras d'Or Lake.

Bell's sense of having made history is clear in what he wrote shortly after the first flight:

"This may seem to be a small matter at the present moment; but when flying machines have become common, and Aerial Locomotion a well recognized and established mode of transit, the origin of the art in Canada will become a matter of great historical interest, and people will look back at the flight made on February 23, 1909, as the first flight of a flying machine in the Dominion of Canada."

The Wright brothers may already have set the big records in the United States, but their achievements had been shrouded in secrecy. Alexander Graham Bell's team edged the science of aeronautics forward by refining inventions, such as ailerons, made by others.

Bell himself was immediately invited to give speeches and interviews about aviation throughout North America, contributing to the fizz and thrill of the new flying machine craze.

And some of the first people anywhere to see with their own eyes that manned flight was now reality were the residents of Bell's beloved Cape Breton, in one of the most remote corners of Canada.

Et Cetera

On Canadian Wings: A Century of Flight by Peter Pigott. Dundurn Press, Toronto, 2007.

The Silver Dart; The authentic story of the Hon. J.A.D. McCurdy, Canada's First Pilot by H. Gordon Green. New Brunswick Press, Fredericton, N.B., 1959.

Listen to a podcast at TheBeaver.ca to learn more about Canada's aviation history.

Flying Away From It All

The dawn of the age of flight launched a new kind of traveller — the backcountry air tourist. by Danielle Metcalfe-Chenail

At the turn of the twentieth century, American naturalist John Muir extolled nature's restorative value. He believed being in the wilderness could heal "thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people" trying to cope with an increasingly urban, industrial world.

But if you were living in North America's industrial heartland, it was hard to get out into real wilderness. You could only go so far by train or automobile, and by the 1920s accessible places like Yellowstone National Park or Niagara Falls were teeming with noisy scenery-seekers. Looking at a map, however, showed that close to Montreal and Toronto lay immense tracts of prime wilderness. But how to reach them?

By airplane, of course.

While early aircraft were unpressurized, loud, and drafty, they were also the only quick way to get to Canada's true backcountry. Those with money and the inclination to pilot their own planes purchased private aircraft; the rest flew with fledgling aviation companies that were just starting to recognize air tourism's potential.

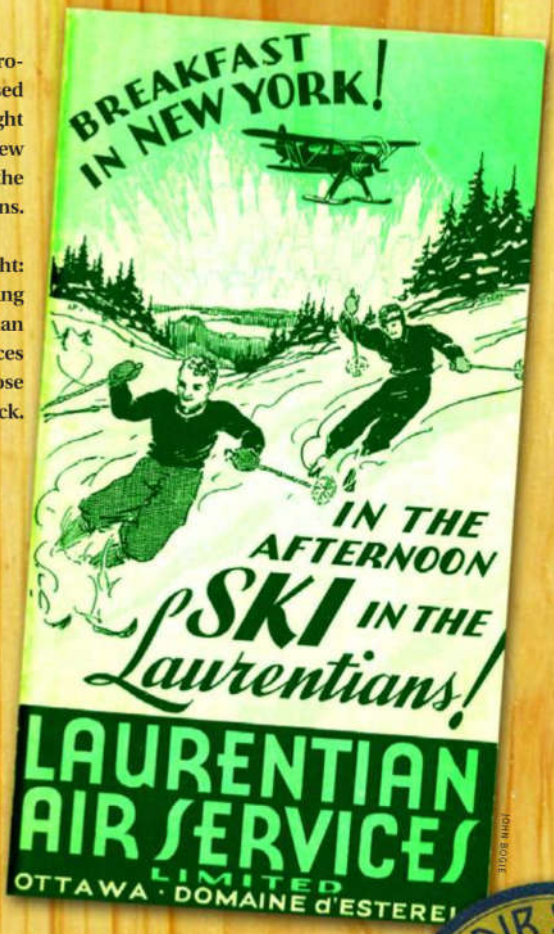
In the 1920s, Canada's tourism industry was booming, thanks mostly to American visitors. According to Canadian historian Karen Dubinsky, "Tourism was the 'new giant of Canadian business,' second only to wheat exports. In 1920 its revenue was comparable to that of pulp and mineral production." More Americans had paid leave than ever before, and many white-collar workers chose to spend their vacation time in Canada at Niagara Falls and other picturesque locales. Vacationers piled into their automobiles — there were 15 million U.S. motor tours in 1924

Tourists in Quebec, circa 1946, pose in front of a Laurentian Air Services Standard Cabin Waco biplane.

JOHN BOGIE

This 1930s brochure promised a quick flight from New York to the Laurentians.

Bottom right: Hunters flying with Laurentian Air Services display a moose antler rack.



JOHN BOYLE

alone — and went in search of recreation.

Middle-class motor tourists often ended up at holiday destinations frequented by the upper classes, much to the chagrin of the latter. As historian Earl Pomeroy wrote in the 1950s: "The aristocracy was quick to take fright and retreat before common clay, and sometimes fled into the remote wilderness." Like frightened birds, some of the elite took to the air.

In the early 1920s, they did not have to fly far to experience pristine wilderness. Quebec's Laurentian Mountains were a favourite summer playground, with the Gray Rocks Inn, about 120 kilometres northwest of Montreal, being a popular Laurentian resort.

In 1921 the Wheelers, an American family who owned the inn, chartered an Avro 504K from Canadian Aerial Service, launching one of Canada's first passenger flight services. The plane was flown by Hervé St. Martin, a famed World War I aviator and stunt pilot. He took guests to choice hunting and fishing spots — one at a time, since the plane had room for only a single passenger. Tom Wheeler and St. Martin subsequently purchased a Curtiss JN-4 biplane — an open cockpit two-seater, like the Avro 504K — and launched Gray Rocks Air Service under the first Canadian commercial aviation license. (It later became Wheeler Airlines, one of the biggest bush operators in Canada in the 1950s.)

The first years of the Great Depression witnessed a tourism slowdown, but by 1935 the industry was again on the upswing, as — in the words of historian Michael Dawson — those with "disposable income continued to enjoy the pleasures of recreation and travel." Affluent tourists tended to avoid municipal golf courses and Depression-era ski trains, such as the P'tit Train du Nord, which took Montreal skiers to the Laurentians. The wealthy preferred to fly to exclusive resorts.

In 1936, two companies geared up to take advantage of the emerging tourist trade: D. and L. Aerial Transportation and Laurentian Air Services. The first was based at Gray Rocks Inn and provided similar services to the Wheelers. The second company, Ottawa-based Laurentian, was more ambitious.

Laurentian began with a Standard Cabin Waco biplane on floats (CF-AYP). A 1936 brochure quoted round-trip fares to Ottawa from Montreal, Quebec City, Toronto, North Bay, Buffalo, and Detroit. For instance, a two-passenger plane could be chartered from Ottawa to Quebec City for $60 (in today's dollars, about $470.)

In the brochure, Laurentian owner Barnet Maclaren offered to take passengers to "any point on the continent" or for quick weekend getaways. A float plane "will pick you up and fly you into that otherwise inaccessible fisherman's paradise on Saturday afternoon in time for the evening's fishing, and will call for you again early Monday morning in time to get you back to the office."

Maclaren also promoted the Laurentians' winter appeal. One brochure featured two young men enjoying downhill skiing while an aircraft flew overhead: "Breakfast in New York! Afternoon ski in the Laurentians!" Customers could board a Canadian Colonial Airways flight to Montreal at Newark Airport in New Jersey at 8:30 a.m. In Montreal they would be met by a ski-equipped Waco that would bring them into the "heart of the skiing

JOHN BOYLE

JOHN BOYLE

Laurentian Air Services founder and president, Barnet Maclaren (far right) with fly-in fishermen at Desert Lake in the Laurentians in the 1940s.

Today's backcountry "air tourist" has not changed much from those who boarded the rickety biplanes of the 1920s and 1930s.

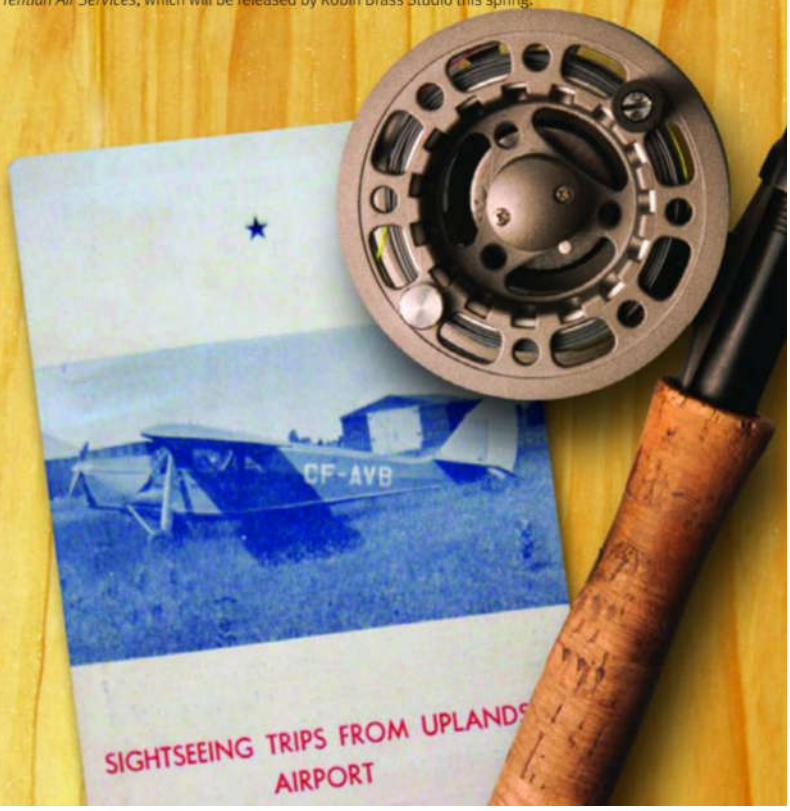
country" by noon. If a day trip was all they wanted, they would be back at Newark by dinnertime.

While air safety was a concern at the time — according to the Aircraft Crashes Record Office in Geneva there were 535 more air fatalities in 1947 than in 2007 — Laurentian Air Services and other Canadian air tourism operations had good reputations. In fact, Laurentian had an accident-free record in air tourism during this entire period. Even so, it was not uncommon for families to split up and fly on different planes, just in case.

Today's backcountry "air tourist" has not changed much from those who first boarded the rickety biplanes of the 1920s and '30s. They tend to be well-off travellers seeking wilderness retreats equipped with the comforts of home. A 1945 statement by D. Leo Dolan, chief of the Canadian Tourist Bureau, still rings true: "The angler of today doesn't want to 'rough it.' You have to provide him with comfort, clean linen, and good food." While some still fly to traditional hunting and fishing lodges, the past few decades have seen an increase in adventure travel — flights to remote locations to ski, surf, hike, and kayak. For instance, for $20,000 one northern tour company will fly you to the North Pole as part of a seven-day Arctic trip.

Naturalist John Muir — who once walked a thousand miles from Indiana to Florida — died in 1914 before large numbers of "over-civilized people" were able to access the backcountry by car or airplane. He would probably shake his head at the millions of tourists who travel to places like Yellowstone National Park without ever leaving their vehicles to walk the trails and experience nature. If Muir were alive today he'd likely be among those taking bush planes to the remote backcountry — perhaps even to the North Pole.

Danielle Metcalfe-Chenail is the author of *For the Love of Flying: The Story of Laurentian Air Services*, which will be released by Robin Brass Studio this spring.



Avro's motion picture section filmed every detail of the Arrow's development.

SHOOTING

HOW AVRO'S FILM DEPARTMENT PRICELESS AVIATION ARCHIVE.

ARROWS

CAPTURED — AND RESCUED — A

BY ALLAN BRITNELL

THE TIME-ETCHED FILM BEGINS WITH AN OVERHEAD SHOT OF A WHITE TRIANGLE MOVING DOWN A GREY, TIRE-STREAKED RUNWAY. THE VIEWPOINT THEN CUTS TO A CAMERA ON THE GROUND, SHOWING A RAPIDLY APPROACHING AIRPLANE. WITH FLAMES BURSTING FROM ITS EXHAUST, THE JET SHOOTS PAST THE CAMERA AND INTO THE BLUE SKY. MOMENTS LATER, VIEWED THROUGH A CHASE PLANE, WE FOLLOW THE FIGHTER JET AS IT ROARS THROUGH THE AIR AND THEN COMES IN FOR A LANDING.

Suddenly, a voice cuts into the mix.

"This is the Avro Arrow," narrator Lou Wise says proudly. "Canada's entry into the supersonic era."

This was the Arrow's maiden flight, as seen in the introduction to *Supersonic Sentinel*, a twenty-three-minute film documenting the creation of the historic aircraft.

Produced by A.V. Roe Canada Limited's photographic department, the film is a valuable record of the CF-105 Arrow, an aircraft that is seen by many as the high-water mark in Canadian aviation. It was, after all, on its way to becoming, at the time, the fastest plane that ever flew. And today, fifty years after the project's cancellation, the Arrow remains a subject of considerable fascination to the public — a source of seemingly endless debate on what Canada's role in world aviation might have been had the aircraft not been scrapped.

What has possibly helped keep the debate alive is the fact that people today can watch films and see photos of the remarkable-looking plane, with its delta wings, needle nose, and sleek profile. This wasn't supposed to happen. Early on, there were official attempts to wipe the Arrow from public memory.

Lou Wise, the head of Avro's film and photo department, remembers clearly the order that came down a few weeks after the federal government announced the cancellation of the project on February 20, 1959.

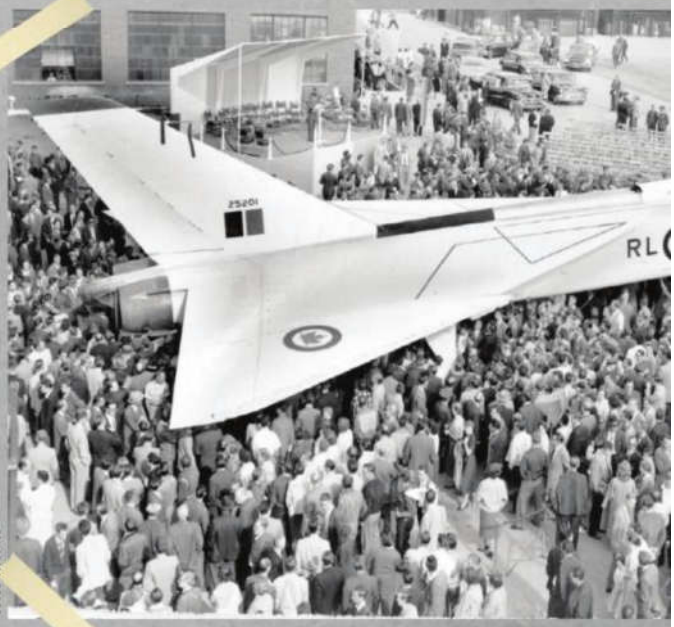
"The order was that *everything* was to be destroyed," recalls Wise, who, at eighty-seven, still conveys a sense of disbelief about what happened. "Not just airplanes, but drawings, photographic reproductions of drawings, all photography that related to the Arrow — and we had made a large number of sixteen-millimetre films in addition to thousands and thousands and thousands of still camera negatives."

For a man who had spent a good part of his career recording the progress of the Arrow — and was intensely proud of it — the order was devastating. With a heavy heart, Wise pondered what to do.

It didn't take him long to make a decision. He called his staff together and gave them his carefully worded instructions. His orders would ultimately impact how future generations would remember this pivotal moment in aviation history.

In 1953, with the Cold War heating up, the Canadian government commissioned A.V. Roe (later known simply as Avro) to build a supersonic, missile-carrying jet interceptor to patrol the skies for Russian bombers. Avro had already built Canada's first jet fighter — the CF-100 Canuck all-weather interceptor — which went into service

LOU WISE



CANADIAN PRESS

THE AVRO PROJECT SHOWED GREAT PROMISE. HOWEVER, OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD EVENTS WERE UNFOLDING ELSEWHERE THAT HAD OMINOUS REPERCUSSIONS FOR BOTH THE AIRCRAFT AND ITS PARENT COMPANY.

Avro phtographer Hugh MacKenzie photographs the Arrow in flight using a high-speed camera in a CF-100 chase plane.

Lower left: The official rollout of the Avro Arow at Malton, Ontario, in 1957.

in 1953. But the Royal Canadian Air Force felt it was already obsolete, as the Russians were developing faster aircraft. A.V. Roe, a subsidiary of the Hawker Siddeley Group — whose origins stemmed from Victory Aircraft, manufacturer of the famed Lancaster bomber — was up for the challenge.

Soon, the company had five aircraft, arguably the most advanced jet fighters of the day, ready for test flights. The test flights were conducted at the company's facility in Malton, Ontario, in the northeast corner of what is today Toronto Pearson International Airport. People who lived in the area were often treated to impromptu air shows at a time when jet aviation was very new.

Avro's photo department documented every step of the way.

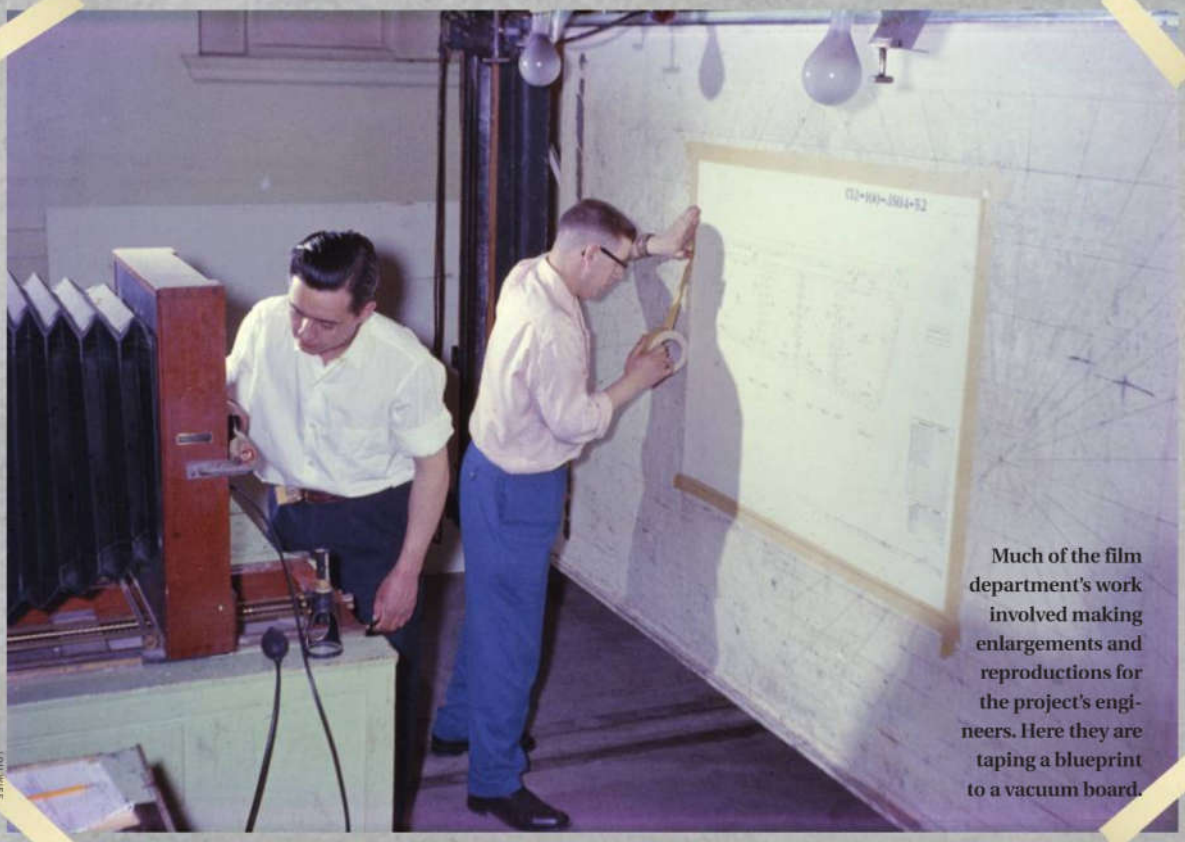
"There was literally nothing that went on without one or two of our cameramen being assigned to cover it," says Wise, seated in a room of his Toronto home that's filled with Avro memorabilia. The photography department was part of Avro's engineering division. Its job was to take X-ray photos of aircraft components, shoot stills of complex details, and document the various stages of testing.

The Avro project showed great promise. However, out-of-this-world events were unfolding elsewhere that had ominous repercussions for both the aircraft and its parent company.

In a strange stroke of coincidence, the day the Arrow was first publicly unveiled — October 4, 1957 — also happened to be the day the Russians launched *Sputnik I*, the world's first satellite. It was extremely bad timing for what was supposed to be Canada's proudest aviation moment to date — the public rollout of a flashy new aircraft. With *Sputnik* orbiting overhead, there was little room for the Arrow in the next day's newspapers.

Yet Avro's staff had much to be excited about. Test flights of the first five planes showed great promise. A sixth plane, the first to be equipped with the Orenda Iroquois, an advanced turbojet engine designed to exceed a then-record speed of Mach 2, was just weeks away from flight. (Mach is the speed of sound, so Mach 2 is twice the speed of sound.) The Arrow seemed on target to deliver on a promise to speedily intercept and shoot down invading Soviet planes armed with nuclear bombs.

But the launch of *Sputnik* sent the Arrow's relevance into a tailspin. *Sputnik* opened up the possibility of a new kind of war, one that, with the push of a button, could see



LOU WISE

Much of the film department's work involved making enlargements and reproductions for the project's engineers. Here they are taping a blueprint to a vacuum board.

CANADIAN PRESS

A Cold War era poster depicts *Sputnik* re-entering the atmosphere.

atomic missiles launched from satellites in space.

Canadian politicians saw trouble. The nation's technological triumph was threatening to turn into a great white flying elephant.

Making matters worse, costs for the Liberal-launched program were rapidly rising; early estimates of $1.5 million to $2 million per plane had spiralled to more than $10 million each. One reason for the increased per-unit cost was that the governing Conservatives had reduced the number of Arrows to be built to 100 from the 500 to 600 that were originally anticipated. This meant that the huge research and development expense would be spread over fewer planes.

With soaring costs and the superpowers now focusing on missile warfare, John Diefenbaker's Progressive Conservative government came to a momentous decision. At 11 a.m. on February 20, 1959, a day that would become known as "Black Friday," Diefenbaker rose in the House of Commons to announce that "the government has carefully examined and re-examined the probable need for the Arrow" and ultimately determined "the development of the Arrow aircraft … should be terminated now."

The decision immediately put more than 14,000 Avro employees out of work and directly affected thousands

more who worked for outside suppliers.

Not only was the program to be terminated, the planes were to be cut to pieces and sold off as scrap metal. The destruction of the planes has long fuelled conspiracy theories, such as that Diefenbaker was pressured by a U.S. administration that had conspired with the American aircraft industry, which was lobbying to sell its own planes. However, there is little evidence for this view. The official word was that the planes were destroyed to prevent advanced technology from getting into the hands of the Soviets.

Like everyone else connected with the Arrow, the photography department went into shock when the cancellation was announced.

"I don't think that any of us truly believed that the project would be cancelled, because we had so much faith in the aircraft," recalls Wise. "I suppose we all went home with long faces and told our wives we were laid off, which was about the same as being fired. The program had been cancelled and we had nowhere else to go."

It turned out that Wise and a few others in the photo department were asked to stay on as the project wound down. A few weeks after Black Friday, word came down from Ottawa to destroy the aircraft and all traces of it, including film and photos. Wise knew this was the wrong thing to do.

CANADIAN PRESS

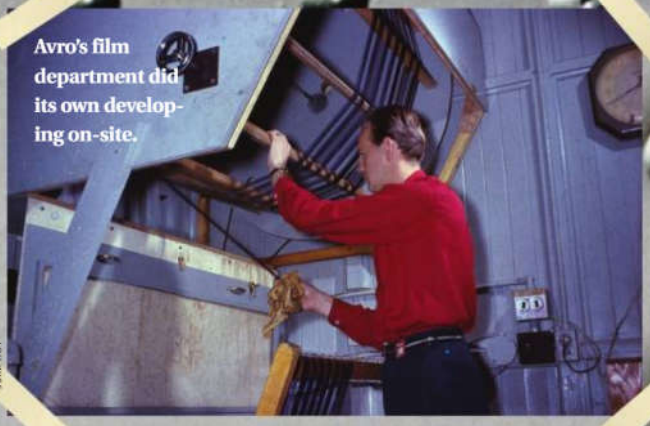
John Diefenbaker

"I figured it was too valuable a collection," he said of the Arrow's film and photo record. "An awful lot of work on the part of a lot of good people had gone into it, and I guess I just didn't see the sense in destroying it all."

Quickly considering his options, Wise called a meeting of the remaining photo staff. He told them what they had been ordered to do. And then he told them they weren't going to do it.

"I said, 'We're not going to junk all this stuff. We're going to go through it and pick out some to cull.'" They did in fact destroy hundreds of images, but they were mostly duplicates of existing ones. "This was so I could look people in the eye and say, 'Yes, we've destroyed negatives.' I never did say we destroyed *all* the Arrow negatives. Just that we'd destroyed negatives."

Some of what remained ended up in the private



LOT WISE

Avro's film department did its own developing on-site.

'JETOGRAPHIC' MOMENTS

Avro had one of the largest industrial photo and film departments on the continent, and its photographers had access to the most advanced cameras and equipment of the day.

The original role of the photographers and filmmakers was to work side-by-side with engineers testing the functions of the aircraft. Their state-of-the-art high-speed film could, for instance, capture the action of explosive bolts forcing open a cockpit's ejection canopy.

Ron Northcott joined the firm in 1954 and become one of a half-dozen photographers in the country trained in high-speed photography. He used a Kodak camera that shot as many as 3,000 frames per second on one-hundred-foot-long rolls of film (a modern movie camera typically shoots twenty-four to thirty frames per second).

To get the camera up to speed, Northcott had to start filming long before the actual event. "All the action was on the last bit of film," said Northcott. "You'd have ninety feet of build-up and ten or twelve feet of action."

The detail captured by the high-speed camera was essential and exceptional. "You could actually read the writing on the side of the rocket crystal-clear," said Northcott, recalling some work he had done on Avro's earlier CF-100 rocket pods. With no Photoshop software available in those days, department staffers painted out dust motes and other imperfections in the final prints by hand.

Later, the department expanded into public relations, shooting images to impress both their RCAF client and a curious, patriotic nation. Its success in this played a large part in the Arrow's long-lasting mystique.

"Avro was very, very good at PR. They knew how to film product," says Paul Cabot of the Toronto Aerospace Museum. Given the volume of PR material distributed, it's somewhat surprising to learn that one man, Verne Morse, was responsible for most of those images.

"No exaggeration — virtually every picture that was released for publication was taken by me, I'm proud to say," Morse said from his Orlando, Florida, home. (Like many Avro staffers, Morse moved on to a job in the U.S. after the program was cancelled.)

With most of the original blueprints long-since destroyed, Morse's photos were essential in helping the Toronto museum's volunteers accurately construct their full-scale Arrow replica, unveiled in 2006. The replica, which does not fly, is on display at the museum. — A.B.

This full-scale non-flying replica of the Avro Arrow, unveiled in October 2006, was built by Toronto Aerospace Museum volunteers.

CANADIAN PRESS

collections of staff, but the bulk of it was quietly filed away in company drawers and filing cabinets.

With his job on the line in any case — although he remained with Avro for a few more years, his job disappeared when the company went defunct in 1962 — Wise was not overly worried about the consequences of disobeying orders.

"I didn't anticipate that anybody would come around and say, 'Show me all the empty drawers.'"

LOU WISE

Lou Wise

When Wise left and Avro went out of business, the photographic material was still in the defunct company's filing cabinets. That material was moved to the offices of Hawker Siddeley, which had taken over Avro's assets. Eventually, officials at Hawker Siddeley passed the collection on to the National Archives in Ottawa, where it has remained ever since.

Given the public's ongoing fascination with the Arrow, the images have not been gathering dust. Many of the photos have been used to illustrate the dozens of books that have been written about the Arrow. *Supersonic Sentinel* — the film narrated by Wise that helped earn him the nickname "Voice of Arrow" — continues to be popular.

"That film is seen by so many people," says Wise. "I've got it on DVD. And I've used it at a lot of meetings over the years. There's a great host of people out there who won't let the Arrow die."

The film got a new life when clips from it and other Avro productions appeared in the 1997 docudrama *The Arrow*, which starred Dan Aykroyd as Avro president Crawford Gordon. Wise even makes a cameo of sorts. One early scene uses clips from *The Jet Age*, an overview of prior Avro accomplishments, complete with the unmistakable, measured, baritone voice-over work of Wise himself.

Wise eventually moved on to a twenty-two-year career in the Toronto Board of Education's media department, and after "retirement" he took off on a third career as an aerial photographer, flying a Piper Cherokee.

But his heart is still close to the Arrow. Today, fifty years after Black Friday, he, like many others who'd worked for Avro, continues to lament the company's demise. "I still believe it was a great misfortune for this country," he says. "Avro was a long, long way ahead of any competition in the States and U.K." The cancellation virtually "wiped out" Canada's aviation industry, he contends.

The planes are long gone, but thanks to Lou Wise and the staff of Avro's film department the images and memory of the Arrow live on.

Allan Britnell is a freelance writer and editor based in Toronto.

Et Cetera

Shutting Down the National Dream: A.V. Roe and the Tragedy of the Avro Arrow by Greig Stewart. McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Toronto, 1997.

Avro Arrow: The Story of the Avro Arrow from its Evolution to its Extinction by Richard Organ, Ron Page, Don Watson, and Les Wilkinson. The Boston Mills Press, Erin, Ontario, 1980.

To hear a podcast with Lou Wise, go to TheBeaver.ca.

THE BEAVER
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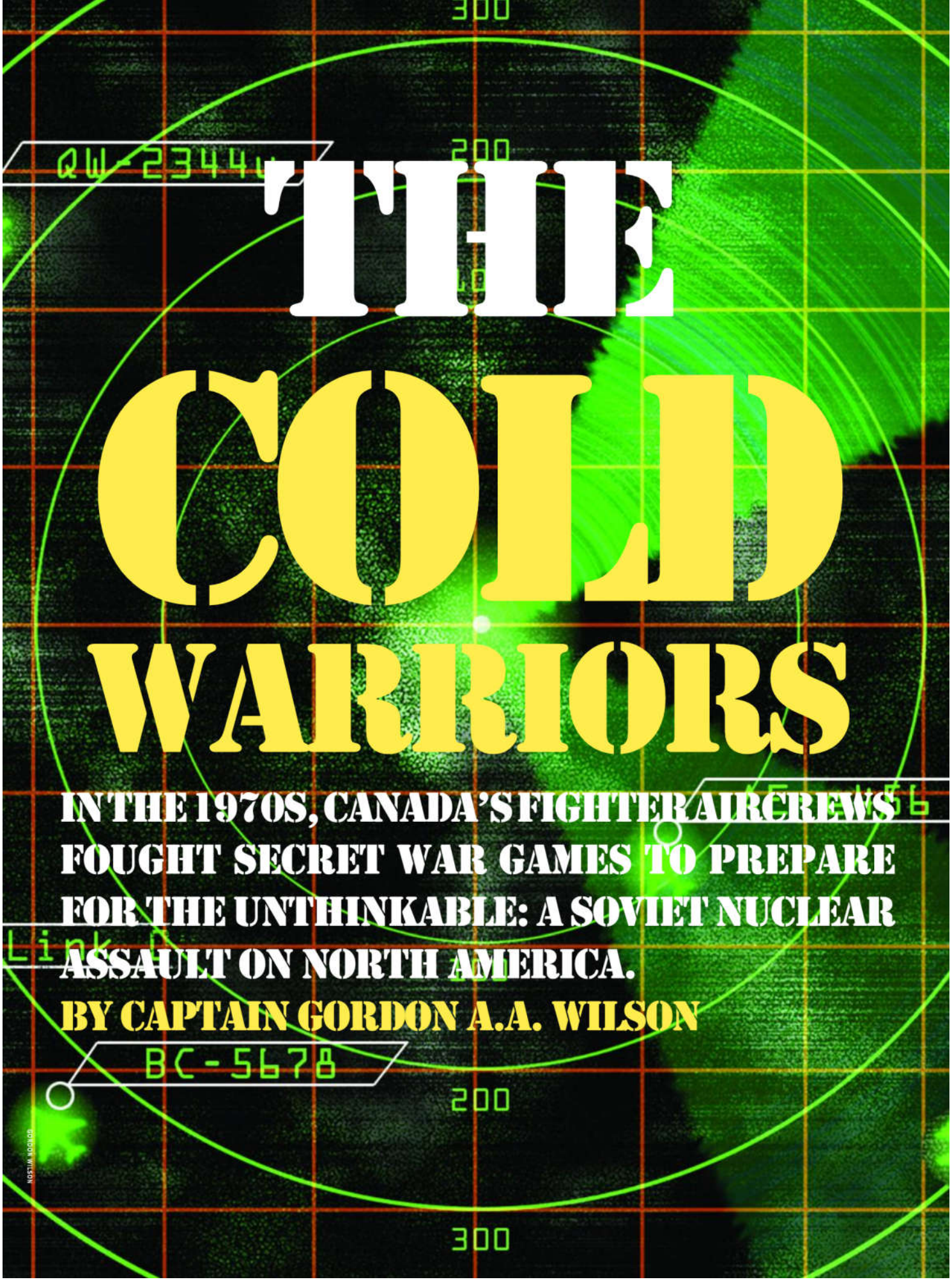
Lieutenant Rick Hovey, left, and Captain Gord Moore pose beside a CF-101 Voodoo fighter jet in the 1970s.


QW-2344
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THE
COLD
WARRIORS
IN THE 1970S, CANADA'S FIGHTER AIRCREWS FOUGHT SECRET WAR GAMES TO PREPARE FOR THE UNTHINKABLE: A SOVIET NUCLEAR ASSAULT ON NORTH AMERICA.
BY CAPTAIN GORDON A.A. WILSON
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Lieutenant Larry Faulkner peered through the darkness, searching the sky for any sign of the fighters that he knew were coming. The glow of the city of Sept-Îles, Quebec, had faded behind him half an hour ago as he flew his Avro CF-100 Canuck above the St. Lawrence Valley in an arcing right turn and set course for Bangor, Maine. At 41,000 feet, he was flying well above most civilian air traffic. Behind him, Captain Nick Chester, the electronic warfare officer, peered into his receiver scope, looking for the bright, telltale spike that would signal the struggle to come.

It was March 9, 1972, and the two Canadian airmen were participating in a secret military practice operation. It was one of many such North American Air Defence Command (NORAD) multiple region exercises carried out in the skies of North America during the Cold War. The goal was to gain practice at intercepting the unthinkable — an attack on the continent by nuclear-armed Russian bombers.

It was the time of détente — the uneasy standoff in the deadly arms race between the superpowers. Canada, geographically positioned on the flight path if Soviet bombers ever came streaming over the North Pole, had a key role to play. Yet few Canadians were likely aware of what actually

A CF-101 Voodoo soars through the skies of British Columbia in this undated photo.

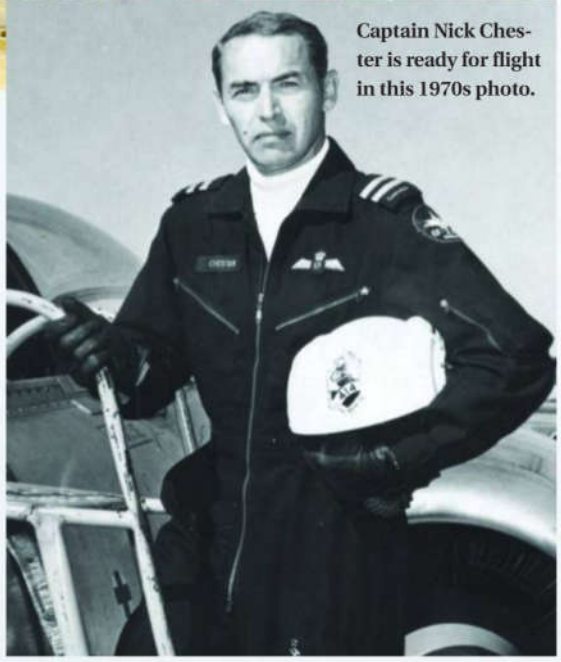
THE CANADIAN FORCES

Nuclear secrets

During the Cold War, Canada's interceptor jet the American-made Voodoo could fire a nuclear weapon, the air-to-air Genie rocket. The presence of the Genies on Canadian soil from 1965 to 1984 was controversial and not officially acknowledged by the Canadian government.

Suddenly, a radio transmission disturbed the quiet hum of the cockpit. Speaking in standard air force language, a surveillance radar operator on the ground warned that they had been spotted. "Brave 124, you have two chicks paired, ten o' clock for forty-five!" Two interceptor jets — "two chicks paired" — were approaching from forty-five nautical miles away.

Chester peered intently into his radar screen. Within moments of the warning, a telltale bright signal came into view. The lead interceptor jet was closing in. "I have him on the scope now," Chester called out. His voice was steady, his concentration focused. Much was at stake. They had just three minutes to avoid being "knocked out of the sky."



Captain Nick Chester is ready for flight in this 1970s photo.

GORDON WILSON

went on in the skies above them as they slept. Elaborate war games were being conducted in the stratosphere. The airmen involved carried out their work with efficiency, and even a sense of fun.

"Oh yeah, it was like a cat-and-mouse game," recalls Chester, who retired from the air force in 1987 and today

Rick Hovey, left, and Gord Moore stand beside a CF-101 Voodoo in this 2008 photo.

THOMAS FRICKE

lives in Vancouver. "The fighter being the cat and you being the mouse. It was our job to simulate an attack by a Bear bomber. And it was an exercise in training not so much for us as for the fighters."

Yet the training always carried serious overtones, says Chester: "Well, the threat was real. As things went wrong with the politicians, stuff got pretty tense."

The early 1970s were a pivotal time in the arms race. Newly elected U.S. President Richard Nixon, still mired in Vietnam, was in March of 1972 just a few months away from signing the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT 1) with the Soviets. That same year in Canada, the Liberal government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau was conducting a review of the country's emergency preparedness planning, which in the 1950s and 1960s had included provisions for fallout shelters, attack warning sirens and public education manuals that offered hopeful advice on "the best way to survive atomic warfare." Youngsters were growing up in a world tinged with dark fears of nuclear annihilation.

Larry Faulkner

Faulkner and Chester and hundreds of other Canadian airmen regularly participated in secret electronic warfare drills, such as the one that took place March 9, 1972. All was quiet as Faulkner and Chester reported to the electronic warfare squadron briefing room at the Canadian Forces Base in Ottawa in the early evening. As the briefing officer spoke, it became apparent something big was up. This was to be an unusually large exercise. Target planes simulating Soviet bombers were to leave from Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Ontario and head for targets in the eastern United States.

Faulkner and Chester were among six flight crews with 414 Electronic Warfare Squadron. They were "Yuri" and "Ivan" — the Russian crew of a simulated Tupolev TU-95 Bear bomber (they actually flew a Canadian-made CF-100 Canuck). Their particular mission was to reach Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, D.C., which housed the American presidential jet.

Following a weather briefing, the crews adjourned to finalize the details of their flight planning. Realizing the scope of the exercise, excitement filled the air as Chester and Faulkner picked up their helmets and headed out into the dark and clamour of the flight line. "Here is your route Larry — try not to get us lost!" teased Chester. Soon, though, his voice was lost in the roar of the ground power units and the din of fuel trucks and departing aircraft.

The men completed a walk-around inspection of the aircraft, and then climbed up the metal rungs of the ladder to gain access to the darkened cockpit. They were strapped into their Martin Baker ejection seats with help from the line maintenance team.

The pilot flicked a switch and the Canadian-designed

Orenda engines rumbled to life. Brave 124 taxied to the runway. Takeoff time was 11:30 p.m. The tower controller wished them luck: "Brave 124 cleared. Takeoff runway thirty-three. Good jamming, good night." After months of planning, the exercise was underway.

The CF-100 became airborne and thundered into the darkness, rapidly ascending to "angels 37" — air force speak for 37,000 feet. With growing excitement, Chester checked the settings of his electronic jammers — which interfered with radar detection — for the upcoming aerial joust.

The route took them east over Montreal and Quebec City to the vicinity of Sept-Îles, Quebec. Brave 124 then started a turn southbound, just after 12:30 am, on a strike mission to deliver their simulated bomb on target. Faulkner checked in with the ground radar operator — known as Faker Monitor. So far, everything was A-OK.

Faulkner's job was to fly the assigned strike route and scan the sky for attacking fighters, taking evasive action as required. A challenging task, considering it was dark and the closing speeds on a subsonic frontal attack would be approximately1,500 km/h — or fifteen times the speed of your car on the highway.

A Russian Bear in action circa 1970.

THE CANADIAN FORCES

Bears

The former Soviet Union's Tupelov Tu-95 named the "Bear" by NATO was a Cold War icon. It went into production in 1956 as a strategic bomber and remains in service in various roles. In recent years, Russia has stepped up patrols by Bears near North American airspace.

Chester, meanwhile, was glued to the radar scope. "Anything on your scope, Nick?" Faulkner asked hopefully. "Just my feet, Larry!" Chester deadpanned. It was an old joke and always worked to break the tension.

Soon, their easy banter grew silent. The NORAD ground radar had spotted them. Chester went to work on the electronic jammers to interfere with the ground radar signal. On the ground, the radar controller noticed the jamming and immediately classified the radar target as hostile. That information was swiftly passed on to the weapons controller, who put out the call for two fighter jets to scramble.

In the operations room of CFB Chatham, New Brunswick, Lieutenant Rick Hovey and Captain Gord Moore sipped coffee and nibbled on sandwiches, nervously wiling away the time as they waited for the call that seemed like it would never come.

They were part of the 416 All Weather Fighter Squadron based in Chatham and flew the McDonnell CF-101 Voodoo. Earlier, they had been briefed on the exercise. They were the defenders, on alert to scramble and intercept the incoming "Russian Bears." They made careful preparations, installing their parachutes in the cockpit ejection seats, checking and positioning their helmets and oxygen masks, and readying the cockpit for a quick departure. They were briefed on the weather; it was –2 Celsius and snowing, with a wind blowing in from the west. Having done all they could to prepare for the mock battle, they walked back to the operations room to wait.

Suddenly the PA system crackled to life. "Golf November 066 scramble!" Hovey and Moore jumped up in response to the call they had been waiting for all night.

With adrenaline pumping, the men ran to the Voodoo, scrambled up the ladder to the cockpit, and vaulted into their seats. The engines roared to life, the afterburners kicking in with a loud boom, hurtling the Voodoo down the runway. Airborne within five minutes of receiving the call, the fighter rapidly climbed to 35,000 feet. (The Voodoo was capable of doing this in just over two minutes; by comparison, a commercial airliner takes about twenty minutes to reach the same altitude).

Soon, Hovey and Moore and the crew of the lead Voodoo were fast approaching the "Russian Bear."

"Brave 124, you have two chicks paired, ten o' clock for twenty-five!" At this warning of the approaching Voodoos, Chester and Faulkner sprang into action. Chester released bundles of chaff — strips of aluminium designed to confuse radar signals.

A red light on the radar receiver came on, indicating an airborne interceptor radar signal from the two Voodoo fighters. The Voodoos' radars had "locked on," enabling them to guide their weapons to the target Canuck. So began the game of electronic cat and mouse. The crewman in the Canuck manoeuvred their electronic jammers and chaff dispensers to break the Voodoos' radar lock. The men in the Voodoo fighters tried to avoid the jamming. A burst of chaff, a quick turn, and some skilful jamming caused the first Voodoo fighter to miss when it fired its "weapon" — in this case a harmless electronic signal. (In a real engagement, they would have been firing either an AIM

4D Falcon heat-seeking missile or an AIR 2A Genie rocket, which was capable of being nuclear-armed.) Faulkner and Chester, a.k.a Ivan and Yuri, were still "alive" and heading for Washington.

It was now up to the men in the second Voodoo fighter — Hovey and Moore — to intercept the intruder before the lead Voodoo re-attacked. Moore's radar scope was covered in "noise" — interference on the screen caused by the Canuck's jamming tactics, which made the target dot extremely hard to see.

So far, Chester's jamming tactics had succeeded in outwitting his opponents. A thought flashed through his mind — perhaps they would in fact shake the fighter interceptors, perhaps they would win this aerial joust. The second Voodoo fighter now had Chester's full attention. He barked out instructions for Larry Faulkner, the pilot: "Larry, hard port thirty degrees now! I will drop some chaff." He reached to push the button that would release the chaff as Faulkner prepared to put the Canuck into a sudden turn. Victory seemed imminent. …

In the Voodoo cockpit, however, Moore hung on to the radar lock on the Canuck while rapidly delivering instructions to Hovey. He followed the target on the radar screen, took a deep breath, and fired his simulated weapon. A big X lit up Hovey's radar screen. Success! His weapon had "destroyed" the target.

Hovey manoeuvred his aircraft the way he would have if he had fired an actual Genie rocket and needed to get out of the way of the resulting nuclear explosion. He rolled it upside down to position the aircraft belly to absorb the blast and shield his eyes from the bright flash, then pulled down to pass safely underneath the Canuck. The crew of the "downed" plane watched, disappointed, as the interceptor flashed by. It was a spectacular sight, with moonlight illuminating the Voodoo's white exhaust contrail.

The ground radar operator confirmed the bad news for the Canuck crew: "Brave 124 , you have been neutralizd."

Training exercises like the one described were essential in testing NORAD's defences against potential nuclear attacks on North America from Soviet bombers. And although even at that time intercontinental ballistic missiles were seen as a much more worrying threat, there was still a need then, as now, to watch for hostile aircraft.

Actual encounters were rare. Faulkner served twenty-two years as a pilot with the Canadian air force and spent three years at CFB Comox on Vancouver Island flying a Voodoo. The squadron he was with was on twenty-four-hour-a-day standby to intercept possible airborne attacks.

"In all my time in Comox, I never did see a Russian plane," says Faulkner, who is now retired and runs a farm just north of Winnipeg. He added that NORAD pilots on the East Coast occasionally saw Russian Bear bombers on their way to or from Cuba. If the Russian pilots flew too close to Canadian airspace, a Voodoo would intercept by pulling up alongside the aircraft. The Russian pilots would often wave and go on their way.

He admits that while he would have done anything to defend Canada, he was a bit uneasy about his work.

"I felt the Cold War was blown out of proportion by the American political system, and I questioned being possibly drawn into a combat mission which may not have been in Canada's best interest," says Faulkner. He adds that he believes Nixon — "who I never had time for" — had on at least one occasion ordered the scrambling of NORAD interceptor jets across North America simply to score political points.

False alarms

There were two notable incidents involving Canadian Voodoo jets armed with nuclear weapons being put on a high state of alert.

- On November 9, 1979, a computer chip malfunction at the NORAD command post in Colorado resulted in a false warning of a Soviet nuclear attack.
- In 1973, the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War prompted U.S. President Richard Nixon to put NORAD on a high alert level.

Today, Canadian fighter pilots, who now include women in their ranks, continue to perform a role similar to that performed by those who were on duty during the Cold War. Their equipment has changed — they fly CF-18 Hornets now — and their NORAD mandate has expanded to include guarding against terrorists and drug smugglers.

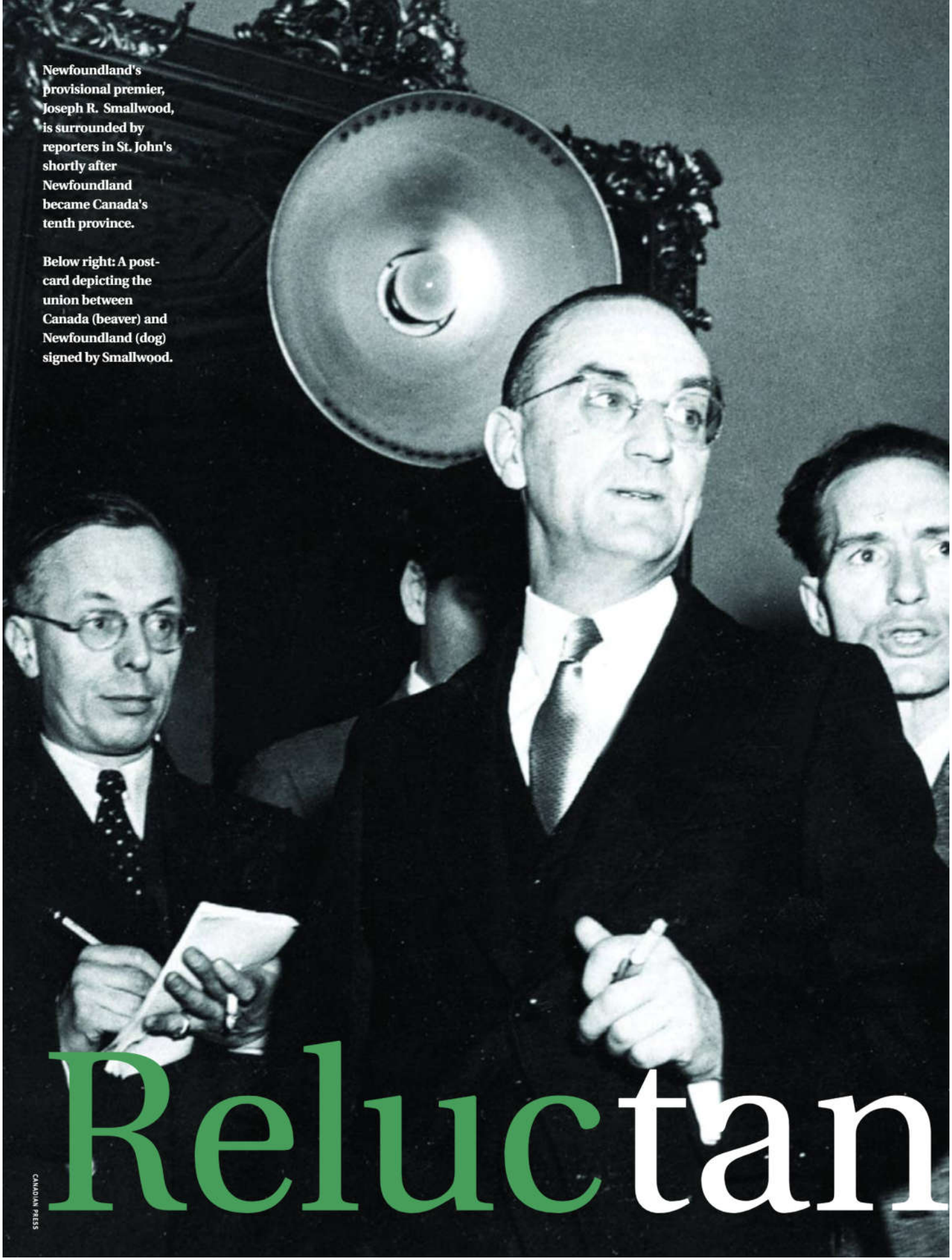
The Canadian Forces no longer has a dedicated electronic warfare squadron — a civilian company provides the Forces with target aircraft and electronic warfare training. But like their Cold War predecessors, today's aircrews continue to hone their skills in practice drills over our skies as we sleep.

Captain Gordon A.A. Wilson is a retired air force and Canadian Airlines pilot. He lives in South Surrey, B.C., and is currently writing *Sparks in the Night Sky*, a book about electronic warfare in Canada.

Et Cetera

Canada in NORAD, 1957-2007: A History by Joseph T. Jockel. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal/Kingston, 2007.

Canadian Nuclear Weapons: The Untold Story of Canada's Cold War Arsenal by John Clearwater. Dundurn Press, Toronto, 1998.



Newfoundland's provisional premier, Joseph R. Smallwood, is surrounded by reporters in St. John's shortly after Newfoundland became Canada's tenth province.

Below right: A post-card depicting the union between Canada (beaver) and Newfoundland (dog) signed by Smallwood.

Reluctan

CANADIAN PRESS

t Union

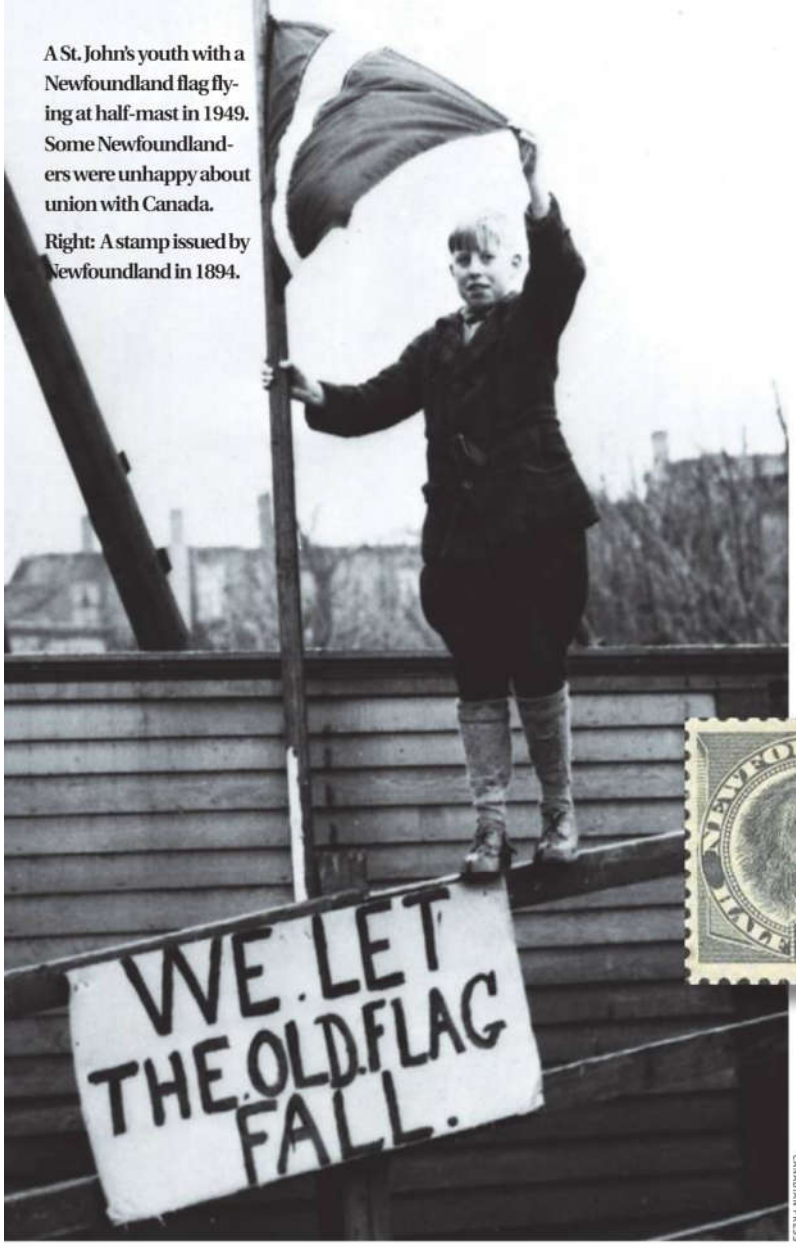
Sixty years after joining Canada, the Rock is no longer in a hard place.

by Rex Murphy

Newfoundland's entry into the Confederation was a very close-run thing. A mere sliver of a majority in a second referendum awarded the forces led by Joseph R. Smallwood (broadcaster, pig farmer, writer) a most tenuous victory. If it is recalled that Confederation with Canada involved a farewell to, or surrender of, Newfoundland's identity as a nation, someone coming innocent to this subject might suppose that so narrow a victory on so profound a question would have led to a period of bitterness and rancour.

It didn't. Perhaps Newfoundlanders were exhausted by the fevers of the two referendum campaigns that led up to the vote. Or perhaps the politics of some sixty years ago had a grace and consent that the politics of today has long forgotten. Either way, one of the most remarkable considerations of Confederation with Canada, once achieved, was how little turmoil or resentment followed that transistion, mandated as it was on one of the closest votes on the profoundest possible question ever submitted to the Newfoundland population.

I take that as a starting point for a survey of Newfoundland and Labrador sixty years after the (for us) epochal event. Confederation settled in with astonishing ease. There were, of course, some pockets of resentment. A few heroes of the anti-Confederate movement were durable in their bitterness and disappointment. And, as in any immensely emotive and close contest, there was a predictable after-cloud of suspicion that the result had been "manipulated," that the greater forces of Great Britain and the Canadian government had arranged the result from the beginning. A few bad novels and one bad movie have mined the miminum vitality of that theory. But overall, Confederation, having been achieved, was accepted (local Oliver Stones notwithstanding) and in the main celebrated.



A St. John's youth with a Newfoundland flag flying at half-mast in 1949. Some Newfoundlanders were unhappy about union with Canada.

Right: A stamp issued by Newfoundland in 1894.

CANADIAN PRESS

Some of this was, emphatically, a consequence of the formidable and relentless persuasions of Smallwood *after* Confederation. Every man is a hero in his own drama, and in the theatrics of ego Smallwood was a playwright of the highest order.

Smallwood sold Confederation after the fact more furiously and more persistently that he sold it before. It was, in words of his that I still find both arch and aching, "next to life itself, the greatest gift God has given to Newfoundlanders." Smallwood found the oratorical means to yoke Newfoundland's long history — battered, isolated, precarious, and proud — to Confederation as a fulfillment of that history, its proper climax. We had not been smothered as a people; we had been released.

But there were reasons why Confederation settled in that went beyond Smallwood's striving for a large page in the history books. And they were, in fact, real history.

Newfoundland was poor, really poor, before Confederation. By any index or standard the people of Newfoundland had it spectacularly hard.The stories of life in Newfoundland in any decade from 1900 are horrifying. Read some account of Wilfred Grenfell's mission in Labrador. Or read Peter Neary's fascinating edition of the letters of a colonial administrator from the 1930s, *White Tie and Decorations*. Every child in the1950s in Newfoundland grew up on stories from parents or grandparents telling of hardships, isolation, poverty of the grimmest kind, poor health, early mortality.

Hard times form character; the axiom is undeniable. And out of hard times, compounded by isolation, a real character — the Newfoundland character: stoic, humourous, selfless, inventive in speech and song — emerged or evolved. But at what price? At what cost of opportunities fore-shorn, potential amputated?

The core of Newfoundland's and Newfoundlanders' identity came out of their survival against the bitter, meagre, grinding conditions of the country's history. But even as we put defiance to song *(*"We'll Rant and We'll Roar Like True Newfoundlanders"*)* or lyricized in ineffably beautiful melodies the brutal traffic of an almost indentured existence as fishermen *(*"Let Me Fish Off Cape St. Mary's"*)* there was always a piercing under-melody in Newfoundland experience — that we had paid far, far too highly for those qualities that we assigned to our national character.

Who else would have lasted here? Who else could have made out of the constant scramble for existence, signposted by calamity and deprivation (disasters at sea, slaughter in war are the terrible "achievements" of Newfoundland's collective experience) such a genuinely rich, enfolding,

A SHORT HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT

Law and order at last: A couple of thousand year-round residents of Newfoundland were governed by the arbitrary rules of fishing admirals until 1729, when British naval Captain Henry Osborne established constables and justices of the peace.

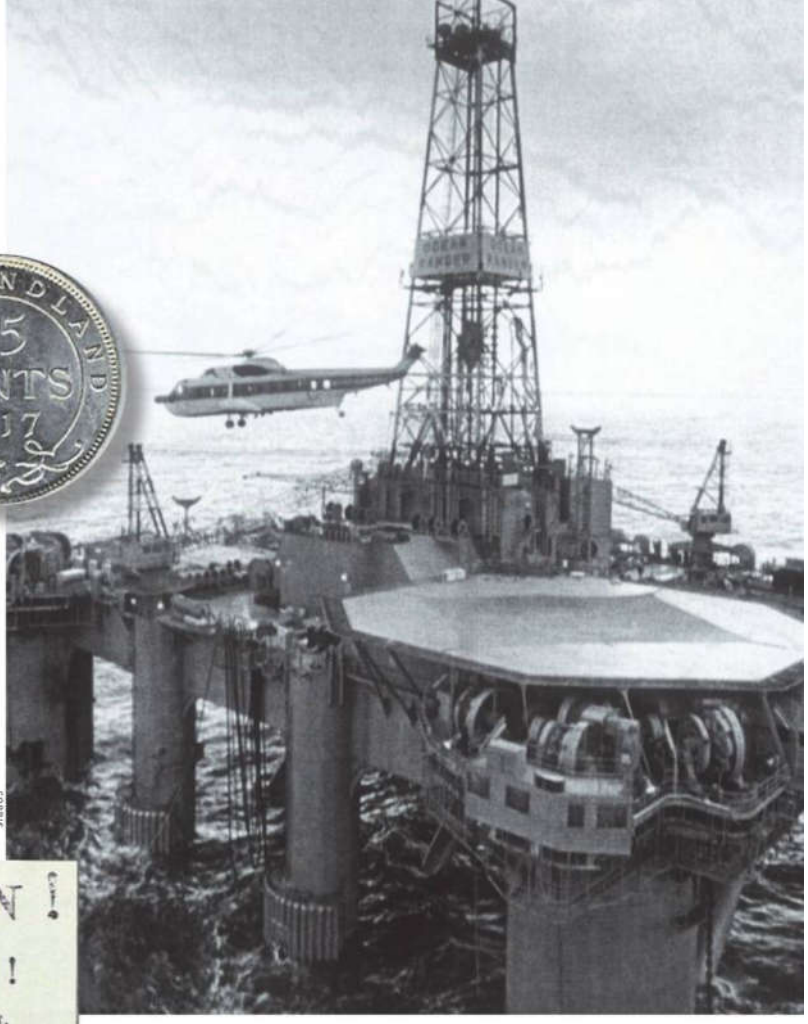
Colonial status: After long being regarded by Britain as a fishing base, not a colony, Newfoundland was in 1824 granted a civilian governor and an appointed legislative council. In 1832, an elected council began sitting with the appointed body.

Democracy: A popular vote in favour of responsible government led to Philip Francis Little becoming Newfoundland's first prime minister in 1855. The colony became a dominion in 1907.

even warm way of life?

The great common voice of Newfoundland is in those questions. We had learned to cherish our hard interactions with a hard place, and worked an alchemy that perhaps few other peoples have, of transmuting what should be merely a record of hanging on to a triumph of community. Indeed, it goes deeper or further than that. It is the central paradox of Newfoundland history that the harder it was the more we "liked" Newfoundland. It is all caught in an almost proverbial tag for Newfoundland: this "marvellous terrible place."

Confederation was the event that broke the miserable chain. We yoked with the larger continent, entered a fully twentieth-century nation, and within a decade were taken up by the great systems and institutions that underpin modern Western society. "No longer alone" is the motto of post-Confederation Newfoundland. But always at the back of every Newfoundland mind, even sixty years on, is the wondering thought: Was the trade a good one? Not as the simple equation: Did we barter our "distinctness" for a better life of goods and services? But did we secure the better life at the expense of some greater largeness of being? To phrase the point this way is to invite, perhaps, an easy mockery.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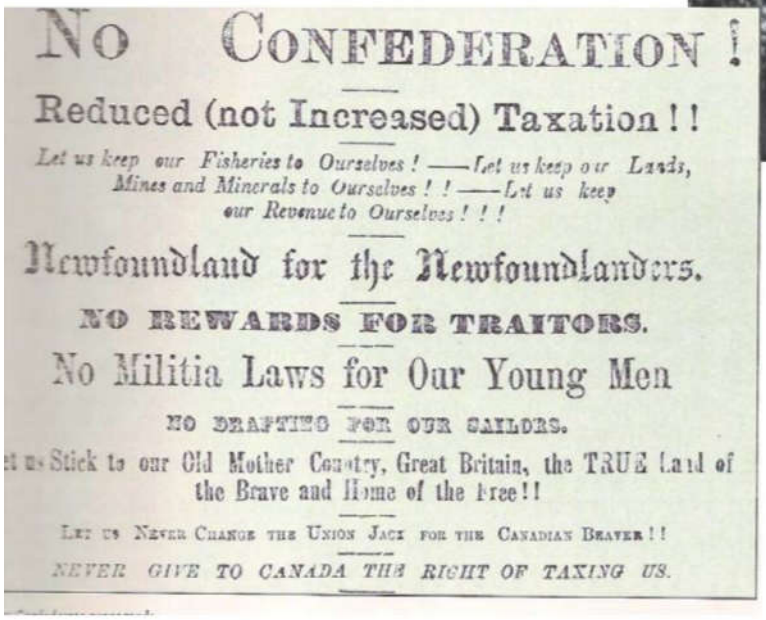
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Let us Stick to our Old Mother Country, Great Britain, the TRUE Land of the Brave and Home of the Free ! !

Let us Never Change the Union Jack for the Canadian Beaver ! !

NEVER GIVE TO CANADA THE RIGHT OF TAXING US.

A helicopter hovers over the *Ocean Ranger* drilling rig on the Grand Banks off the coast of Newfoundland. The platform capsized and sank on February 15, 1982, killing all eighty-four on board.

What's large about poverty or child mortality, ignorance or isolation? But for those who feel deeply about Newfoundland, or have that lavish affection for the place that is the strange birthmark of every Newfoundland soul, the question of what was "lost" by Confederation will always refer to elements both too large and too subtle for standard accounting.

By standard accounting, there can be no debate at all about Confederation. We are better off for it. It may be that the generation born

IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Early attempts to join Canada: Union with Canada was considered in the early 1860s but the public quashed the idea in the 1869 election. The notion was revisited in 1895 after a series of disasters left Newfoundland destitute, but talks went nowhere.

Government by commission: The Great Depression bankrupted Newfoundland and people faced starvation. Confronted with rising social unrest, the Newfoundland government approached Britain for aid. As a result, the elected government was replaced with an appointed commission, which governed from 1934 to 1949.

The tenth province: With economic stability restored, voters in 1948 chose between commission government, self-government, or union with Canada. Union won by fifty-two percent on a second referendum and Joseph Smallwood became the first premier in 1949.

CANADIAN PRESS

Natural Ressources Minister Kathy Dunderdale, Premier Danny Williams, and Mark Nelson, president of Chevron Canada, sign the Hebron oil project in St John's on August 20, 2008.

Was the trade a good one? Did we barter our "distinctness" for a better life of goods and services?

since Confederation is the very first one in Newfoundland, since Newfoundland was a place name on the early maps, that has had the means — schools, hospitals, communications, a standard of living above subsistence — to realize its potential. The first generation for which choice replaced necessity as the essential dynamic for a true majority of Newfoundlanders.

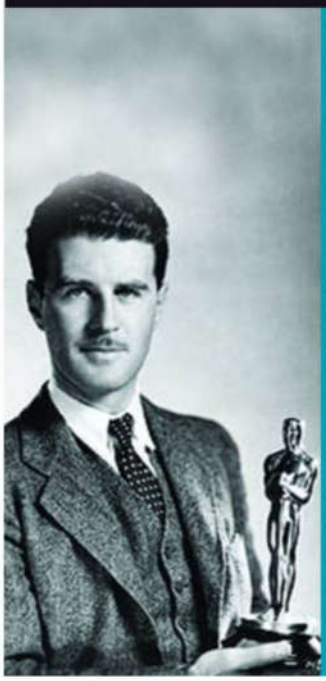
This is a very compelling recommendation for Confederation, and it is probably the enduring practical one. But every major choice is also a foreclosure; the embrace of Confederation in 1949 was equally a farewell. It was a farewell to a singular and profoundly textured strain of character and identity. Newfoundland life, for all of the deprivations and abrasions of history, was also marked by its intensity, by an abundance of response, a relish in living here. The vigour, inventiveness, humour, and charge of Newfoundland culture has been for almost all of its existence one of the strange miracles of this continent.

Confederation was a shield against the wind, but for some Newfoundlanders (I think I'm one of them) it will always be tinged (in no mean or bitter sense) with the rueful flavour of a resignation — that our winding, odd, precarious, difficult, perplexing journey since Cabot's landfall had to close. As I noted at the very beginning of this note, there was remarkably little turbulence after the choice had been made. Newfoundlanders 'became' Canadians — a remarkable transition when it's thought about — almost overnight.

But even sixty years on there is still the quiet thought — perhaps instinct is the better term — that in the exchange, made necessary by history and endorsed by every measure of practicality, we may have let slip something of the elusive scant glory caught in the paradox of "this marvellous, terrible place."

Rex Murphy is a well-known commentator who regularly contributes feature documentaries and political commentary for CBC's *The National*. He also hosts CBC's *Cross Canada Checkup* and is the author of *Points of View*. Murphy was born in Carbonear, Newfoundland.

Coming in *The Beaver* April • May



Canada's Rosa Parks
She only wanted to watch a movie. How Viola Desmond, a beautician from Halifax, became a key figure in the fight for racial equality in Canada.
BY DEAN JOBB.

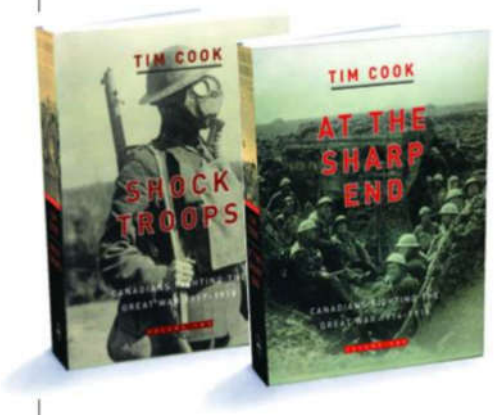
Beer Wars
Canada was once delightfully awash in small breweries making distinctive beers for local markets. Then came the prohibitionists.
BY MATTHEW BELLAMY

The Oscar Family
Montreal sound wizard Douglas Shearer and his actress sister Norma collectively won more Academy Awards than practically anyone. Yet hardship ruled their lives.
BY SUSAN GOLDENBERG

For more on Newfoundland's history, go to thebeaver.ca

Reviews

Reviews editor•Phil Koch•pkoch@historysociety.ca



THE BUTCHER'S BILL

At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1914-1916, Volume One
by Tim Cook
Viking Canada, Toronto, 2007
608 pp., illus., $40 hardcover

Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1917-1918, Volume Two
by Tim Cook
Viking Canada, Toronto, 2008
736 pp., illus., $40 hardcover

It is more than ninety years since the Great War ended on November 11, 1918, and only one Canadian who fought in that war is (as this is written) still alive. The war still resonates, however, for its huge casualties, its destruction of great empires, and for the way it established Canada as a fighting power and, as a direct result of that battlefield skill, as a recognized nation. The Great War mattered, and in these two splendid volumes historian Tim Cook explains how Canadians fought the war.

Cook's books are welcome representatives of the new military history. There is much on fighting and weapons and much on generals, but also much more on the ordinary soldiers than the "old" history ever gave us. We also learn about tactics and training, about the ways in which technology was harnessed to war, and how mustard gas lingered in the mud and rose silently at dawn to maim and kill. We get enough on the home front and politics to make sense of how Canada's leaders planned — or, more accurately, didn't plan — the raising of the armies, and Cook presents a very close look at "the butcher's bill," the cost of the war.

The numbers are staggering in their horror. Canada enlisted 619,636 men and nurses; 51,748 were killed in action or died of wounds, while 7,796 succumbed to disease or injury. Another 1,388 Canadians died in action or in accidents in the British flying services, and 1,305 Newfoundlanders, their dominion not yet part of Canada, died while serving with British forces. Add to this 172,950 members of the Canadian forces who suffered wounds, and you have a total of 234,741 casualties, or fifty-five percent of all servicemen.

However, since only 425,000 Canadians went overseas, and only 345,000 made it to France, the casualty toll thus rises, as Cook notes, to almost seventy percent of those who crossed the Channel. He then refines the numbers even further, observing that only 242,000 served in the infantry, which took some eighty percent of the casualties. In other words, to be an infantryman was to be all but guaranteed death or wounding. No wonder the Great War affected Canada as profoundly as it did.

The Canadian soldiers were in many ways an untrained mob when the First Contingent left Valcartier, Quebec, to go to England in the autumn of 1914. These men, almost two-thirds of them British-born, proved themselves at Ypres in April 1915, withstanding the German gas attack. Then, as more battalions came to England, and eventually to France and Flanders, the Canadian Corps began to learn how to operate in the ghastly conditions of the Western Front.

The key figure was the corps' second commander, the British General Julian Byng. His personality won him devotees among the troops, and he picked out the good commanders among the Canadians while resisting Sam Hughes, the mad minister of militia, in his efforts to put cronies and relatives in positions of responsibility.

It was also Byng who selected Arthur Currie as his successor in the summer of 1917. A Victoria, B.C., property speculator who had literally stolen $10,000 intended for his militia regiment's uniforms when he ran into financial difficulty, General Currie nonetheless proved himself a man of integrity and principle and a superb battlefield commander.

Cook's second volume traces Currie's role as the Canadians captured Lens, fought through the horror of Passchendaele, and then played a decisive role in the Hundred Days, the period from August 8, 1918, to the Armistice. Cook's account of this last period is quite wonderful, a detailed examination of the great battles that saw the Canadians smash the Germans at Amiens on August 8, cross the Canal du Nord and breach the Hindenburg Line, and then advance to Mons where they ended the war.

The Germans had been battered in their great offensives in 1918, but they were no pushovers as they used their machine guns to inflict maximum casualties on the attackers. The shock troops of the Canadian Corps had some 45,000 casualties in the Hundred Days, almost twenty percent of the war's total, and over forty percent of the Corps' strength on August 8. Such numbers are almost unthinkable today, and soldiers at the time grumbled and complained about Currie sacrificing them to advance his own career.

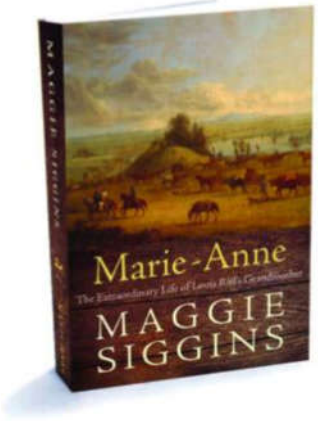
That was a gross calumny, and Tim Cook is at pains to make sure his readers realize this. Currie tried desperately to use his artillery and his units' ability to manoeuvre to save his men's lives, and he resisted the most foolish efforts of Field Marshal Douglas Haig and his more stupid army commanders to waste Canadian lives. But in the Great War, the machine gun and artillery ruled, and high casualties were inevitable.

These are superb books, brilliantly researched, well illustrated, and adequately written. They make clear just how well the greatest generation of Canadians

Reviews

behaved in what many thought of as the Great War for Civilization.

Reviewed by historian **J.L. Granatstein**, former director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum and author of *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace* (University of Toronto Press).



REBEL WOMAN

Marie-Anne: The Extraordinary Story of Louis Riel's Grandmother
by Maggie Siggins
McLelland & Stewart, Toronto, 2008
320 pp., $32.95 hardcover

Maggie Siggins uncovered the remarkable story of Marie-Anne Lagimodière, Louis Riel's maternal grandmother, while doing research for her best-selling 1995 biography *Riel: A Life of Revolution*. Her primary source was an obscure pamphlet published by the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, entitled *The First Canadian Woman in the Northwest, or the Story of Marie Anne Gaboury, Wife of John Baptiste Lajimoniere Who Arrived in the Northwest in 1807, and Died at St. Boniface at the Age of 96 years.*

Siggins wanted to flesh out Riel's grandmother's character, and in *Marie-Anne* we soon learn she had the spirit of a rebel and pioneer extraordinaire. Siggins made several trips following as closely as she could the portage route her heroine took at the turn of the nineteenth century through Quebec, the Red River Valley, and the Northwest.

In 1806, at twenty-five years old — the age she would have become a *vieille fille* (old maid) — the beautiful bourgeoise Marie-Anne Gaboury met and fell for Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière, dressed in his fur trapper's costume of deerskin jacket, leggings, and moccasins. He had returned to his native Quebec village and had been invited to speak of his adventures in a local school hall.

Following a short courtship and an extravagant French-Canadian wedding, Marie-Anne decided to follow her new husband on his journey out west — a 2,800-kilometre voyage by canoe. Her decision probably shocked Lagimodière as much as her own family.

Siggins' newest book is far from just a sober account of a pioneer life — it bursts with memorable, sometimes humorous, anecdotes. For instance, she includes the standard priest's benediction for a French-Canadian wedding of that period, which begins: "Remember that your Nuptial bed will one day be your deathbed...."

Lacking in primary sources, this biography seems padded with already well-known historical facts — such as how the beaver was the "black gold" of early Canada — as well as a few too many pages on tribal wars. However, Siggins includes delightful nuggets that bring the period alive. She describes in leaping details the life of the voyageur and how the gutsy Marie-Anne survived the hardships of nineteenth-century travel.

At Fort Pembina, in what is now North Dakota, Marie-Anne learned about the buffalo hunt. She became fluent in Cree and Ojibwa, and was nearly poisoned by her husband's "country wife," a Cree woman who had borne his children. Marie-Anne gave birth to Reine, her first of eight children, with the help of native midwives. Again, Siggins evokes the period as she describes baby toys hung on the cradle, including a dried duck's head and the jaw of a squirrel.

In this rich stew of people and politics, one sometimes loses sight of Marie-Anne herself. Siggins is most vague when she explains that Louis Riel, who would have been thirty-four when Marie-Anne died, was "one of her favourite grandchildren." There is no analysis of their relationship, and thus no real illumination about these famous relatives. Riel's mother Julie is barely mentioned.

Siggins might have added a few more interesting tidbits, such as how Marie-Anne's oft-told story of a night at Fort William, where she witnessed drunken debauchery, could have influenced the teetotaller Louis Riel's stand against alcohol.

Issued from the lively pen of Mag-

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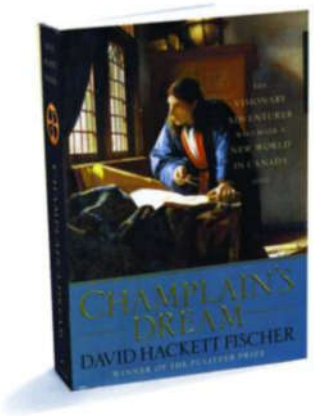
gie Siggins, *Marie-Anne* is nonetheless a worthy spinoff of *Riel* and a robust read about an adventurous Canadian woman pioneer of the nineteenth century.

Reviewed by **Anne Cimon**, a Montreal freelance writer. Her latest book is the biography *Susanna Moodie: Pioneer Author*.



VISIONARY FOUNDER

Champlain's Dream
by David Hackett Fischer
Knopf Canada, Toronto, 2008
848 pp., illus., $37 hardcover

In this doorstop-sized book, David Hackett Fischer presents the most complete biography of Samuel de Champlain (circa 1570-1635) to date. The subject of *Champlain's Dream* is, of course, the great mariner, explorer, and founder of Quebec, which celebrated its 400th anniversary in 2008.

Fischer, a Pulitzer Prize-winner for his 2004 book *Washington's Crossing*, brings a generous and expansive approach to this most recent attempt to find out who Champlain was and what he was responsible for. In nearly 650 pages of text, including sixteen informative appendices, Fischer presents a highly attractive Samuel de Champlain as a "visionary" whose lengthy career made him not only the "Father of French Canada" but also the provider of an ethical and humanist path for development of French North America.

Fischer situates his study between what he describes as the hagiographical and the iconoclastic poles of Champlain scholarship. He seeks to understand Champlain in his context, and provides valuable insight into his place of origin, his early experiences, and his situation as a representative of commercial, religious, and above all royal authority in the nascent New France colony.

For Fischer, Champlain reflected the peace-loving qualities of the people of his home *pays* of Saintonge, in the coastal west of France. Champlain grew up in the "Atlantic world": he moved easily between Spanish and French ports, and acquired extensive knowledge of the New World from English, Dutch, Portuguese, and Castilian fellow seamen. Observant always, Champlain shaped his own techniques of both seamanship and New World leadership on the basis of what he had encountered in the wider Atlantic world.

In addition to his tremendous skill as a mariner (Champlain made more than twenty-five successful and often very speedy crossings of the Atlantic, never losing a ship), Champlain is seen by Fischer as exponent of a humane, tolerant, and pluralistically minded colonialism in the northern part of North America. This is not a new idea: John Ralston Saul, in his *Reflections of a Siamese Twin* (1997), describes the idea of East-West, tolerant, and multi-ethnic dynamism as the heart of the Canadian experience. Saul placed Champlain at the very foundation of this dynamic, which was given life at the *tabagie*, or great gathering of Montagnais, Algonquin, and French on the beach at Tadoussac in 1603.

Fischer, describing the Tadoussac meeting as "the seat of the nation," further develops the idea of Champlain as a tolerant, ethically enlightened, and far-sighted nation-builder. Champlain respected his native counterparts and sought to draw them into closer bonds of affinity with the French. He projected force where he felt necessary, but did not act in an arbitrary way. He led wars, such as the 1609 campaign against the Mohawks, but also carried out successful negotiations, such as the peaceful surrender of the Quebec settlement in 1629. He worked to curb French abuse of natives, but also sought to temper the revenge ethos and the brutal treatment, including torture and ritual cannibalism of prisoners, practised by some indigenous peoples.

Fischer's deeply researched book, well-adorned with useful maps, charts, and illustrations, thus establishes a convincing portrait of an ideal colonial leader, who, having witnessed the brutality of the Inquisition in New Spain as a young mariner, vowed to provide a better example of government to the New World peoples of the North. This book provides a strong statement

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of what was a good, if tardy, start to French colonization, one which, however, did not in the end prevail.

Of course, Champlain's dream is also an enduring Canadian dream — of a pluralistic, East-West, tolerant, just-minded, and multilingual polity. Professor Fischer provides a resource for the Canadian imagination, as well as a splendid quadricentennial tribute to perhaps our most likeable hero.

Reviewed by **Peter Goddard**, who has written about the missionaries who came to New France with Samuel de Champlain.

MORE BOOKS

Extraordinary Canadians: Lord Beaverbrook
by David Adams Richards
Penguin Canada, Toronto, 2008
204 pp., $26 hardcover

Extraordinary Canadians: Big Bear
by Rudy Wiebe
Penguin Canada, Toronto, 2008
208 pp., $26 hardcover

Lord Beaverbrook, by David Adams Richards, is a lovely book about a subject who is definitely difficult to love, or even to respect.

That William Maxwell "Max" Aitken, First Baron Beaverbrook, was at times a cad, a womanizer, and a glory hound, there is no debate — nor does Richards attempt one. Rather, Richards — who grew up in the same rural New Brunswick hometown as Aitken — portrays Beaverbrook as a sympathetic character who deserves our admiration, despite his many faults.

A novelist by trade, Richards clearly feels empathy for the roguish Beaverbrook. Having walked the same streets as Aitken, he says he understands what drove him to leave Atlantic Canada to seek fame and fortune elsewhere.

Ultimately, his argument is this: Beaverbrook was no better, but no worse than his peers. And, despite all of his mischief, Aitken did much good, including helping win the Second World War for the Allies as a minister under Churchill. To Richards, in Beaverbrook's case at least, the ends do justify the means. This reader is still not convinced. However, thanks to Richards' masterful storytelling, I'm also glad to have gone along for the ride.

Meanwhile, *Big Bear*, by Rudy Wiebe, is a more straightforward biography. You'll find no moral ambiguities to ponder here.

Wiebe, also a novelist, previously earned a Governor General's Literary Award for *The Temptations of Big Bear*. As expected, this is an entirely sympathetic take on the controversial aboriginal leader's life. And that's okay, for there is certainly much with which to sympathize.

A Cree leader who became swept up in the 1885 Northwest Rebellion, Big Bear was arrested, tried, and convicted on flimsy evidence. Convicted of treason felony, he was sentenced to three years in Stony Mountain Penitentiary.

Big Bear's story unfolds during a cataclysmic period for the people of the Plains. Ravaged by European-borne diseases, brought to starvation by the near extermination of the buffalo, the aboriginal tribes were — within a period of about a decade — reduced to utter destitution and reliance on government assistance to survive.

Wiebe, relying on written records and testimonies as well as oral histories, weaves a powerful portrait of a man forced down a path he did not want to tread, and wronged by a justice system he did not understand.

Big Bear compels the reader to question the very notion of cross-cultural justice and to rethink present-day aboriginal issues in a whole new light. **— M. R.**

Lady Landlords of Prince Edward Island
by Rusty Bittermann and Margaret McCallum
McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 2008
224 pp., illus., $27.95 paperback

Lady Landlords of Prince Edward Island by Rusty Bittermann and Margaret McCallum recalls a long-forgotten piece of P.E.I.'s history. It tells of the division of most of the island's land in 1767 among a group of mostly absentee British landlords.

The group, all male, included government officials and military officers who by means of a lottery were rewarded for their support of British imperial policy. This book highlights the lives of four women who came to own estates on the island through inheritance.

Bittermann and McCallum have thoroughly researched these four absentee landlords, all of whom resided in England. The authors recount the attention — or lack thereof — that the women gave to their wilderness properties, the subsequent problems attached to the bequests they received, and the political struggle by the P.E.I. government to get the land back from the proprietors.

Lady Landlords is enjoyably illustrated with a number of black-and-white reproductions of paintings and photos, and is recommended reading for anyone interested in P.E.I. history, women's lives in an era dominated by men, or the lives of aristocrats in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

— B. T.

Madness, Betrayal and the Lash: The Epic Voyage of Captain George Vancouver
by Stephen R. Bown
Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, 2008
272 pp., illus., $34.95 hardcover

Madness, Betrayal and the Lash is Stephen R. Bown's attempt to restore the reputation of one of the greatest, yet least-known British navigators: George Vancouver.

An understudy of the renowned Captain James Cook, Vancouver explored the Pacific Northwest coast and was the first European to enter Burrard Inlet (near modern-day Stanley Park in Vancouver). He also dashed the dreams of those who hoped the region might be home to the western entrance of the fabled Northwest Passage.

Vancouver had a temper and refused to coddle his crew. He made powerful enemies who actively — and successfully — worked to destroy his reputation back in England. Vancouver would die, ignored and forgotten by English society, at the age of forty.

Bown believes Vancouver did not deserve this fate and presents a strong defence of the accused. Well-written and engaging, *Madness, Betrayal and the Lash* is a successful attempt to humanize a man lampooned by his peers as a coward, a tyrant, and worse. **— M. R.**

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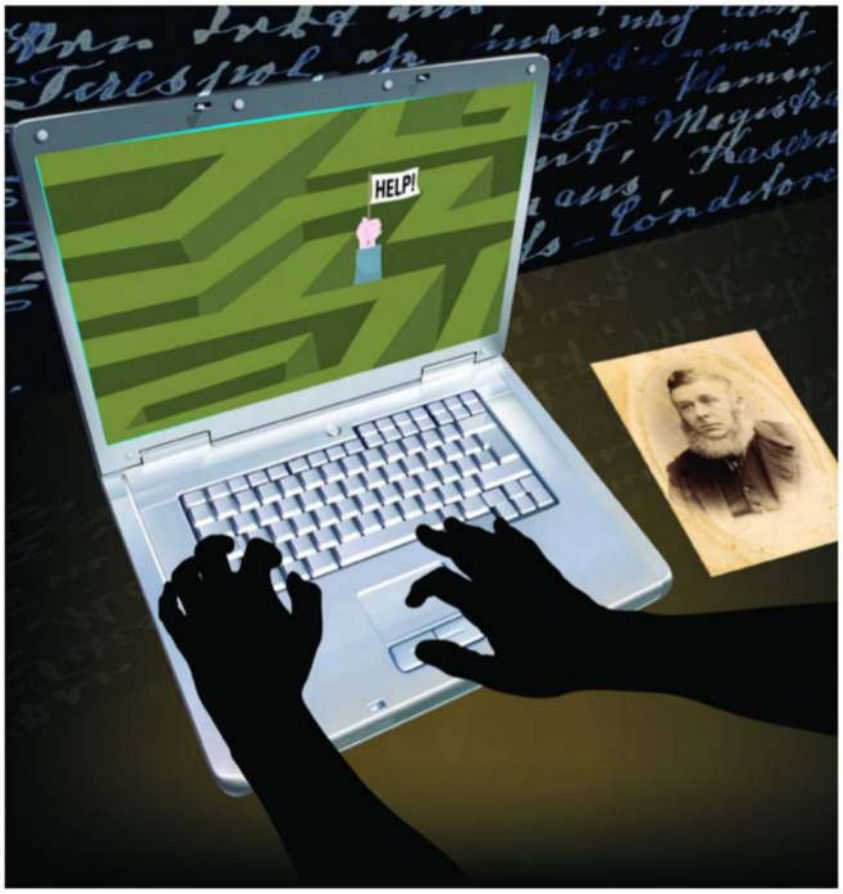
Roots

Caught in the Net

The lure of the Internet is strong for beginning genealogists, but beware of its many pitfalls, says Fraser Dunford.



MONTAGE MICHEL GROLEAU

It is the best of places — and the worst of places. People have fallen in love with the Internet and nowhere is that more apparent than with people seeking their family history.

Unfortunately, here, as elsewhere, love is blind. Wise people will take heed. Used properly, the Internet is one of the best tools a genealogist can have. However, like all other aspects of family history, you have to know what you are doing.

This is not a negative article about the Internet — far from it — but it is an article about what can go wrong on the Internet. You have to be concerned about the safety of your identity, the safety of your own data, and the reliability of the data you acquire on the Net.

For a genealogist, there are four uses of the Internet: to look at original documents; to search indexes; to look at prepared genealogies; and to contact others who are interested in the same families as you.

Viewing original documents is the safest and most valuable use of the Internet. It is a wonderful experience to see an image of a page containing your ancestor's signature and almost as wonderful to see a document that shatters one of your brick walls.

However, things may not be quite as obvious as they seem. For instance, when examining a census, "age" could mean "age now," "age next birthday," or "age rounded to nearest five-year interval." Do what the professional genealogists do — consult a good guidebook before searching the documents.

Searching indexes is "in" but hardly anyone does it properly. Consider how an index is created. Someone, somewhere, sat staring at a mass of very old documents written in probably very indifferent handwriting for the purpose of extracting some of the information, likely a name, a date, and (we all hope) a clear reference to the original document. Now consider the possibilities for error: bad handwriting, transcriber fatigue, unfamiliarity of the language, or even simply hitting the wrong keys when entering data (my nemesis is character order — there *is* a difference between 1879 and 1897).

The best indexes are done by genealogical societies. They know their subject and their area and they check their indexes. However, too often, the people or companies doing the indexing have no idea what they are indexing, nor any knowledge of the area the documents are from. The howlers in indexes of British and Quebec genealogical records are the stuff of legend.

Mistakes happen. In one of our own indexing projects, we used competent, Ontario-based people who, familiar with Picton, Ontario, mistakenly transcribed Pictou, Nova Scotia as Picton, N.S.

I am amazed at the number of people I have spoken with who say "Oh, I already have my family tree. I went on

the Internet on Saturday and found a tree someone had already done."

When I ask, "Is it accurate?" they look at me blankly and say "But it is on the Internet!"

I then tell them that if they will give me details on their earliest known ancestor, I will, in a week, have a website up claiming that their ancestor is descended from Henry VIII. Most people get the point I'm trying to make — but a few still have their eyes light up at the thought.

Seeking prepared genealogies is the most questionable thing for a genealogist to do on the Net. Hardly any are checked, few have any citations, and some are pure works of fiction. I once saw a family tree that had a son born earlier than his father. Any thoughtful person will spot those errors. Be a thoughtful person.

Some sites provide access in exchange for data. To maintain access, a person has to keep providing data. If that person runs out of data — well, some people invent some. Remember — the genealogy is not proof of your family tree, it is only an indication of where you should look.

I should also not have to remind you to be cautious with your personal information. Con artists are prowling the genealogical chat rooms, and you have only his or her word when someone claims he or she is your fourth cousin three times removed.

Never give information on living persons. Realize that anything on the Net has become public property and you no longer have any control over how or where it will be used.

This article seems to convey a negative opinion of the Net. It has to, to counter the enormous appeal the Net seems to have. You can have a wonderful and profitable experience on the Internet — so long as you use common sense and a healthy dose of skepticism.

So happy hunting! May you find that missing ancestor — in a genealogy with proper citations that takes you to online, original documents.

Dr. Fraser Dunford is a professional engineer and a former university academic and administrator. In his second career, he is a professional genealogist and the executive director of the Ontario Genealogical Society. He is the author of several books on genealogy.

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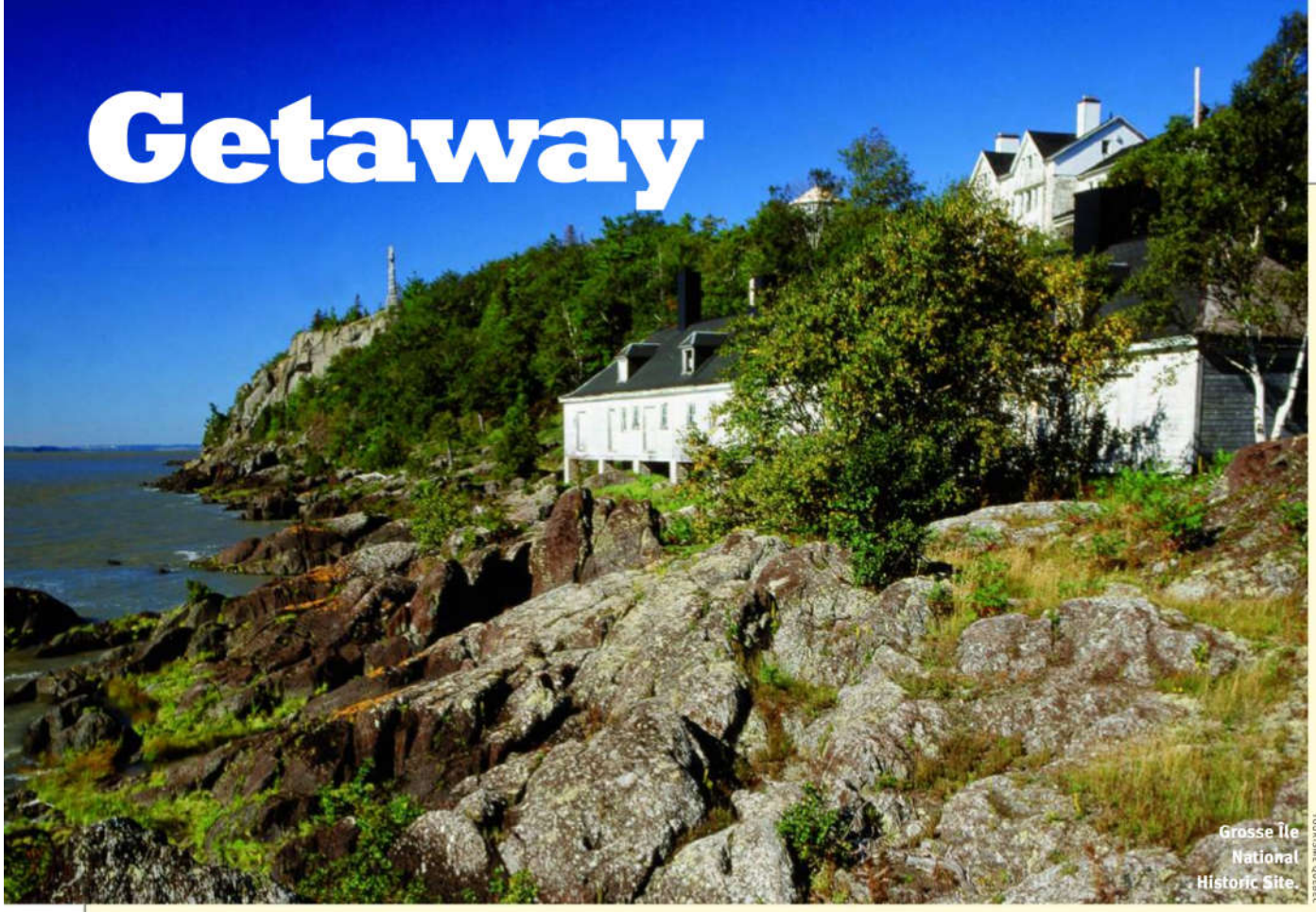


Grosse Île National Historic Site.

TOURISME QUÉBEC

Canada's Ellis Island

Penelope Johnston explores the tragic legacy of Grosse Île, Quebec's former immigrant quarantine station.

As our boat nears Grosse Île, it feels as though we are sailing back in time. The island — actually one of twenty-one islands in the Iles-aux-Grues archipelago of the St. Lawrence River — looms before us, a lonely place that's haunted by the memories of past tragedy.

Now home to a National Historic Site, the island seems so out of place compared to the cheerful joie de vivre of nearby Quebec City.

It was here, in 1832, that soldiers hastily erected tents, sheds, and a forty-eight-bed hospital to fight the Asiatic cholera epidemic brought by immigrants to these shores.

Some, like tourist Robert Henry of Toronto, are going to the island in search of their own past. Between 1832 and 1937, tens of thousands of Irish immigrants passed through Grosse Île in search of a better life in Canada.

Among them were Henry's Irish ancestors, who were forced to disembark at the Grosse Île quarantine station before heading on to their main port of call, Quebec City.

"We have two relatives that passed through in 1837 — Samuel Henry and Ernest Dempsey," Henry says. "One settled in Ontario and the other settled in Quebec."

Cemetery at the Irish Memorial National Historic Site at Grosse Île.

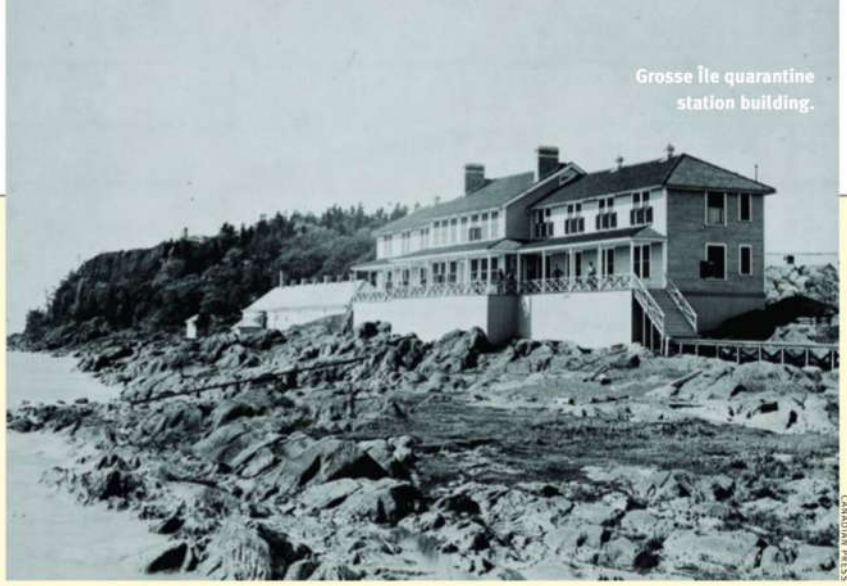
FIRSTLIGHT

At the pier, we're greeted by Israel Gamache, a Parks Canada representative who leads us on a walking tour of the west side of the island, where the healthy were quarantined.

We pass a grey wooden wash house, where officials first attempted to disinfect newcomers. It's an eerie sight, and one can almost picture crowds of anxious immigrants lining up for their turn at disinfection.

A little further, we pass a series of hotels built from 1892 to 1914 to house, respectively, the healthy first-, second-, and third-class passengers waiting in quarantine.

We start to climb over rocks, heading ever higher, passing trees and stunted bushes to the highest point on the island. At the top stands a fifteen-metre-high



Grosse Île quarantine station building.

CANADIAN PRESS

Celtic cross, which is cut from stone quarried at Beebe, Quebec.

Built in 1909, it stands as a memorial to the Irish immigrants who died of typhus here in 1847 and 1848.

Their tragic tale is written here in English, French, and Gaelic. But it is only when we pass through dense undergrowth and down a hill to a grassy field that the enormity of the tragedy is made clear.

Driven out of Ireland by famine, waves of people left their country in a desperate search for a home in the New World.

The influx reached its height in 1847, when in a single season more than 100,000 Irish arrived at Grosse Île. Starving and malnourished, the newcomers had little immunity to the typhus that ran rampant on the ships carrying them across the Atlantic. In overcrowded and unsanitary conditions on board sailing ships, five thousand Irish perished of typhus at sea. Another 3,226 died in the hospitals on Grosse Île. As many as sixty people per day were buried here at the height of the outbreak.

Today, rows of white crosses mark the human toll. Nearby, a monument tells the story of five physicians who lost their lives that summer as they tended to the sick and dying. Among them was a Dr. Benson of Dublin — only twenty-two years old — who died eight days after his arrival. As we walk, some visitors take time to read a glass memorial that lists the names of those who perished.

We cross a grassy field, heading for the trolley that will take us along a narrow strip of land, past Cholera Bay, and into the central section of the island, home to a small village.

On the far eastern side of the island is the Lazaretto, built in 1847 as the last of twelve original sheds used to house healthy visitors, but converted into a hospital in 1848 and then used primarily to treat smallpox. Scrawled on the walls are writings by the patients.

The north section of the island is a bird and wildlife refuge area, with more than twenty-one species of rare plants and over two hundred species of birds thriving in the marshes and forests. Beware of poison ivy.

By the 1880s, health care for the immigrants began to improve, thanks to advancements in the understanding of diseases and their treatments. At the harbour, a brass plaque sits in a red, barn-like disinfection building, which was built in 1892. The plaque honours the efforts of Dr. Frederick Montizambert, Grosse Île's former chief medical officer, who led many health-care initiatives that helped reduce the death toll. Grosse Île ceased operation in 1937.

Odette Allaire, a Parks Canada spokesperson, says every Canadian should visit Grosse Île at least once in their lifetime.

"The Americans have Ellis Island," she says. "We have Grosse Île."

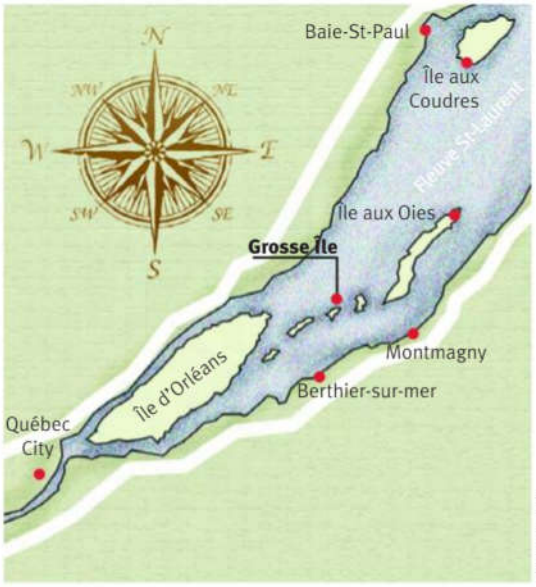
Penelope Johnston is based in Toronto and has written about the history of medicine for the past twenty years. She is working on several historical fiction novels.

IF YOU GO...

Boat tours to Grosse Île, located about forty-eight kilometres downstream from Quebec City, depart mid-May to mid-October at 10 a.m.

Leave from Quai 19 in Quebec City for a one-hour-and-forty-five-minute journey courtesy of cruise company Croisieres le Coudrier. The guided tour on the island lasts four hours.

Boats also pick up passengers at Saint-Laurent, Île d'Orléans, and Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.



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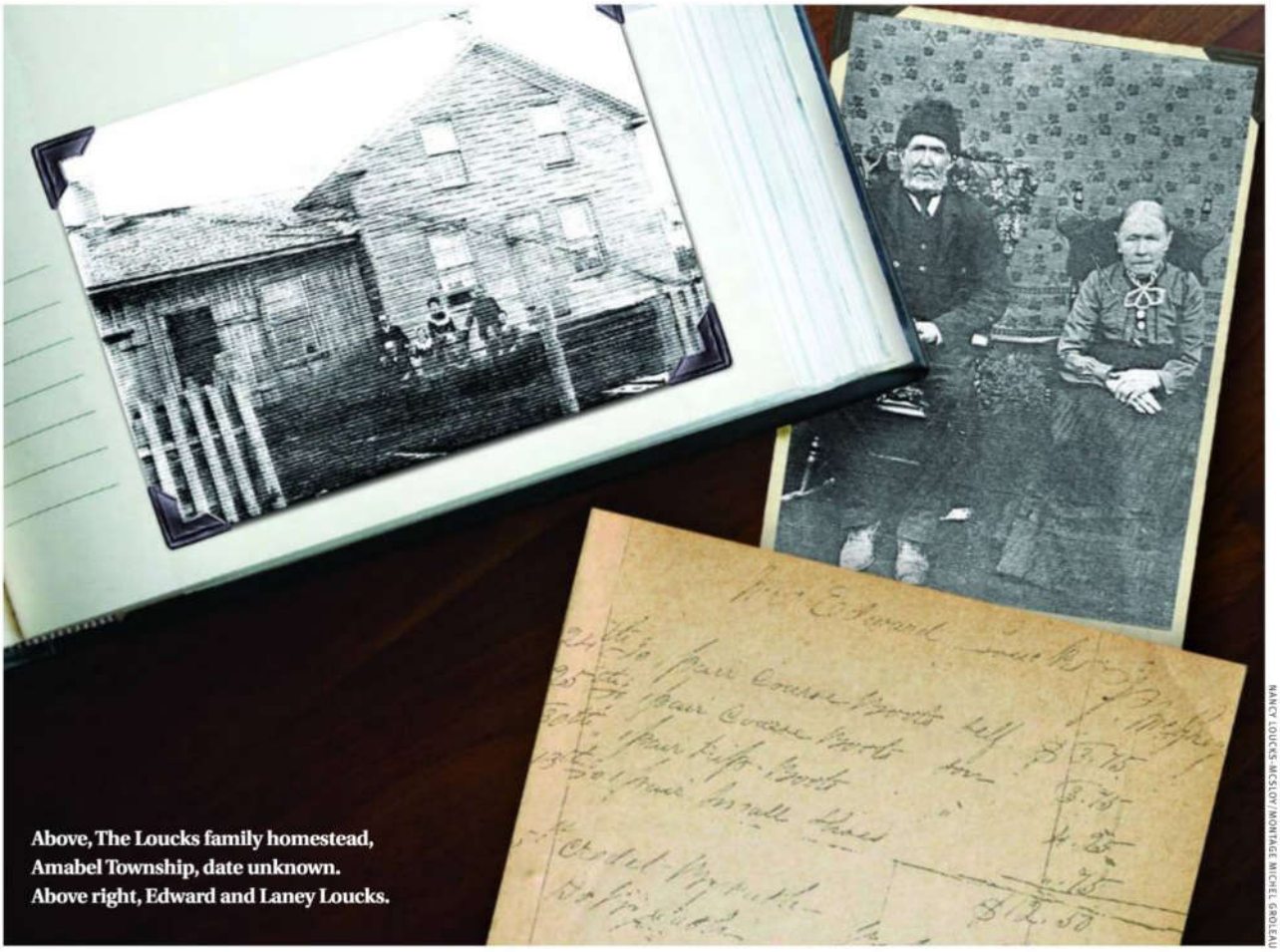
Your Story

The long way home

Nancy Loucks-McSloy recounts her great-grandmother's brave journey from an English orphanage to a new life in Upper Canada.



NANCY LOUCKS-MCSLOY MONTAGE MICHEL GROLEAU

Above, The Loucks family homestead, Amabel Township, date unknown. Above right, Edward and Laney Loucks.

She was an orphan, a waif, a stray living in an orphanage in Chiswick, England.

The orphanage was part of the Children's Friend Society, which, among other things, sought to teach children domestic and farm duties. The girls generally worked as housemaids for the elite, while the boys laboured on farms. The society believed teaching children these skills would help prevent vagrancy in society.

By the early 1830s the society began shipping some orphans to new homes overseas, including to Upper Canada.

One of these children was Laney Israel. On April 6, 1835, the nine-year-old girl would embark on a journey halfway around the world to start a new life. Laney was sitting in her classroom that fateful day when a man entered the school and said, "Who's for Canada?" Laney and a friend quickly put up their hands and shouted, "We are!"

They were promptly whisked out of the classroom with just the clothes on their backs — nothing else — and soon boarded the tall ship *Toronto* for the long trek to Montreal.

The trip was treacherous, to say the least. The ship's master, a man named Collinson, and a handful of passengers spent nearly forty days on the vessel, which was also filled with general cargo. In later years, Laney would tell her family of the horrors of the passage — the rough seas, the filth, the sickness, the deaths, and the gruesome sight of bodies being thrown overboard.

Mercifully, on May 11, 1835, the ship docked in Montreal. Laney's trip was not complete, though. Very soon, she

boarded a St. Lawrence Steamboat Company vessel and travelled to her new home near Kingston, Ontario. Once she arrived, officials placed her in the home of John B. Merchant and she became a housemaid for his family.

The work would have been hard for a nine-year-old, but she had no other options.

Laney grew up in the Kingston area, and on September 28, 1847, she married Edward Castle Loucks, a wagon maker from Napanee, Ontario, and a descendant of United Empire Loyalists.

The couple farmed until 1863 before pulling up stakes, first heading to Durham, Ontario, and later to a new home in Amabel Township, close to Sauble Beach, Ontario. The distance from Kingston to Durham is more than 480 kilometres. The road from Durham to Sauble Beach stretches for another eighty kilometres. Laney's journey, by horse and wagon over rough roads, would have taken days to complete.

Laney lived on a farm from the time she was married until her death in 1908. She and Edward raised eight children during very difficult times. As was often the case in the 1800s, they lost several children at birth. The infants are buried in a small cemetery on the family homestead.

Today, when I walk my nine-year-old granddaughter to her school bus stop, I can't help but think about how my granddaughter is now the same age as her great, great, great-grandmother was when she left England. What a difference time makes; my granddaughter is not allowed to leave the street, while Laney left her homeland!

When I think of Laney, I picture her as very brave and free-spirited. She was obviously spontaneous, acting on a whim to leave England for a journey into the unknown. Perhaps she felt that anything would have been better than life in an orphanage. Whatever the case may be, she was one of many who paved the way for future generations. I speak of Laney with great pride, even though I never met her, as she died years before I was born.

As you head east on Sauble Beach's Main Street, you will come across Zion Amabel Cemetery. There you will see the tall, white tombstone that is Laney's final resting place. Her memorial stone is a lasting reminder of the legacy she and hundreds of other British orphans left behind as a consequence of their incredible journey.

Nancy Loucks-McSloy is a freelance writer based in London, Ontario. Her passion for genealogy began in elementary school when she wrote a story about her great grandmother, Laney Israel-Loucks, that was the winning entry in a history competition.

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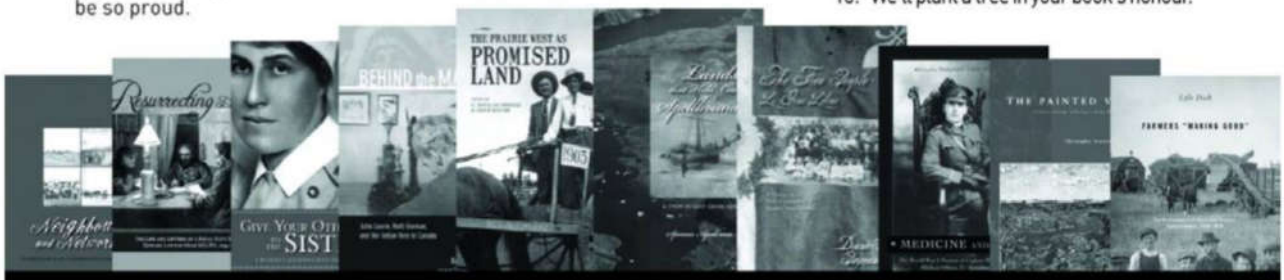

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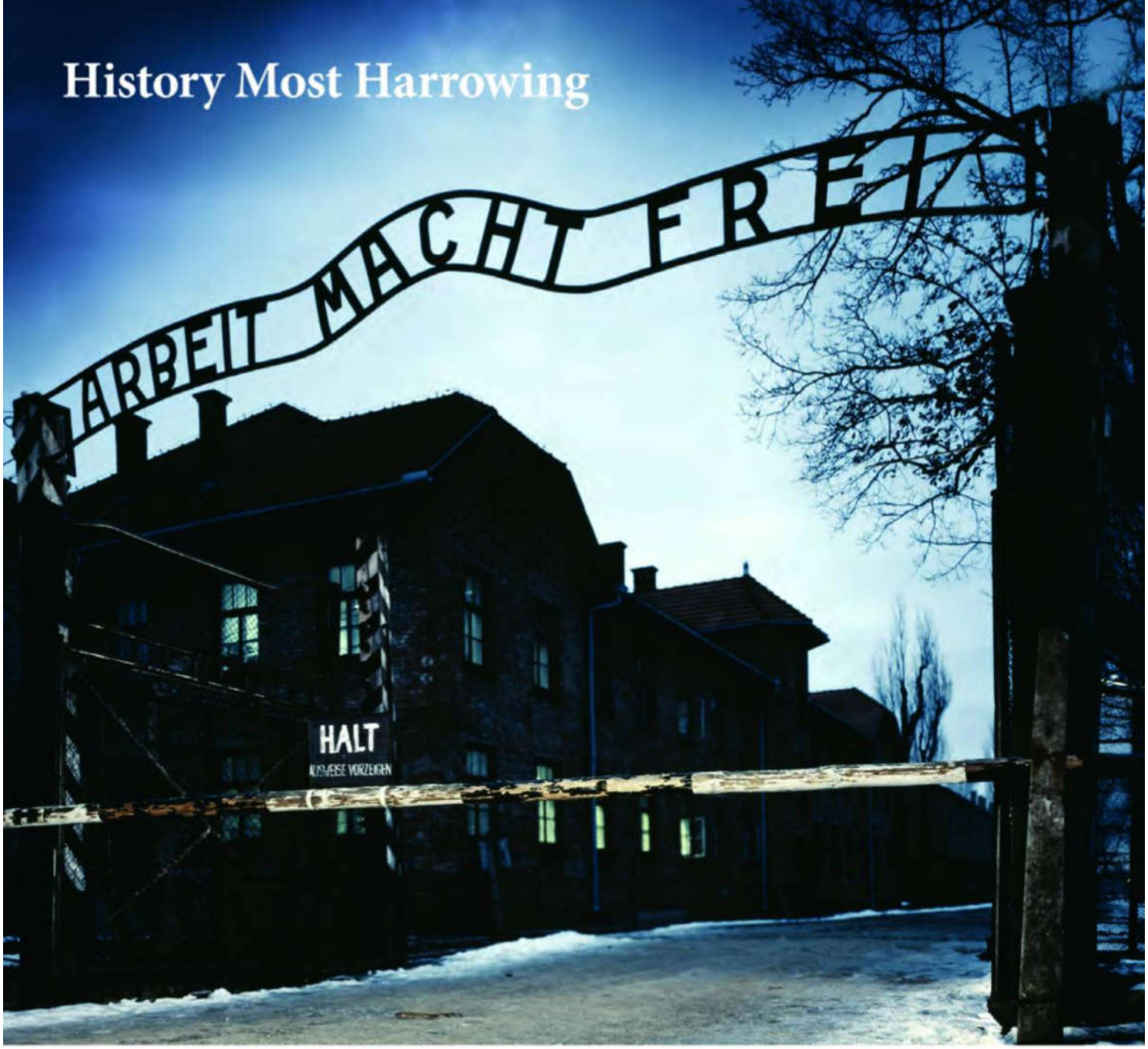

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Christopher Moore

Listening to the North

Dorothy Harley Eber's books of Inuit oral history help ensure that the stories of the North have a future.

Dorothy Harley Eber gives much of the credit to her interpreters. In her new book *Encounters on the Passage*, she salutes Tommy Anguttitauruq in Gjoa Haven, Oleepa Ikidluak in Iqaluit, Leah Otak in Igloolik, Christopher Amautinuar in Pelly Bay, and many others in communities across Nunavut. She praises them as "amazingly talented," "highly trained," and possessing "remarkable skills."

"The interpreters are so important," she said when I talked with her recently. "If the interpreter is known and respected, then you get more — more stories, more detail."

But the listener matters too. For forty years Dorothy Harley Eber, a Montreal journalist with no academic or institutional credentials, has been going to the North and listening as Inuit elders talk of the old days. The tapes and transcripts she has collected during many visits have become a precious source of information about Inuit life during its transformation from a hunting-based society to today's Nunavut. Though she speaks no Inuktitut, the books she has made of these conversations offer us *kabloona* [non-Inuit people] a remarkable window on the Inuit history of the North.

Oral storytelling tradition has kept Inuit history alive.

MCCORD MUSEUM

Art, not history, first took Dorothy Eber north. She was a freelance journalist in Montreal when she saw an exhibition of Inuit prints and sculpture at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

"Immediately I knew I wanted to go and write about that art," she said.

It took a few years, but in the late 1960s she made her first trip to Cape Dorset on southwestern Baffin Island in what is now Nunavut.

"The weather was so bad, and I only had a day and a night there. But I had a good interpreter, and I was able to talk with several of the leading artists of the day. I went back in the summer of 1970, and that time I stayed a month and I did the Peter Pitseolak interviews."

In the 1940s, Peter Pitseolak (1902–1973) had acquired a camera and began photographing Inuit camp life. In order to develop his pictures, he and his wife built darkrooms in igloos in the midst of hunting expeditions. Eventually, Pitseolak wrote a memoir (in Inuit syllabics), and his story — combined with Eber's interviews with him and with his photographs and prints — became a book, *People from Our Side*, first published in 1973 and still in print today. Eber believes it was the first Inuit oral history to be published.

On a later interviewing trip, Eber took with her an 1881 photo of an Inuit family who had travelled south to New London, Connecticut. She thought her hosts might be interested in the century-old news story.

"Hey, that was Johnniebo!" they said. To her surprise, they knew all about the family in the photo and why they had gone south. Their account of the story was much more detailed than the historical record, at least about the Inuit side of things. Eber grasped the richness of preserved memory among this storytelling people — and she began to listen.

Johnniebo and his family had gone south with a whaling crew. In the nineteenth century, whaling was the main source of contact between Europeans and Inuit along the coasts of the Eastern Arctic. From the rich fund of stories the Inuit elders retained, Eber wrote *When the Whalers Were Up North* (1989), an oral record that is a substantial history of Arctic whaling as well as a vivid recapturing of

the Inuit communities that participated.

In her latest book, Eber turns to the British naval expeditions sent to discover the Northwest Passage in the mid-nineteenth century, culminating in John Franklin's doomed expedition. Impressed by the way another book, *Unravelling the Franklin Mystery* by David C. Woodman, shone new light on Franklin's fate by featuring century-old Inuit testimony collected by Franklin searchers, she decided to see what further stories might still be in the repertoires of today's Inuit storytellers. In communities across the Arctic, Eber sat down as a guest in one small home after another, with a pot of tea at hand and Discovery Channel (Nunavut's favourite channel — it's the animals) in the background, and let her informants talk.

Encounters on the Passage is alive with suggestions for enthusiasts still seeking Franklin's grave, or his lost record books, or his sunken ships. But what stands out is how the Inuit experienced those crazy incursions. Eber's stories bring home the true weirdness of these aliens and their great vessels suddenly planting themselves amidst the Inuit people. Were they human? Who dared approach them? No wonder they fuelled a thousand stories worth retelling for the next hundred and fifty years.

If someone finds the *Erebus* and *Terror* wrecks this summer — and they will be looking — Inuit testimony will have been crucial to their success. However, the richest material in this book, as with all of Eber's work, is not what it says about a few doomed intruders from the south, but the role it plays in storing and preserving Inuit storytelling.

The future of Inuit oral history, Eber is sure, lies with the Inuit themselves. "There will be Inuit authors in the next decade who will take this over."

Already, local elders societies and research centres are compiling their own story collections, preserving an Inuit heritage for an Inuit future and adding to oral traditions recorded as long as a century ago, many of which still await editing and analysis.

Many of the elders Eber first listened to are now long dead. But their voices endure.

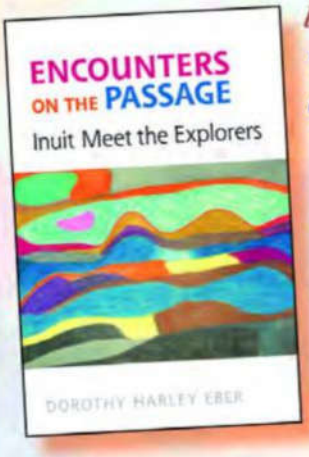
"I have met some who did not want to speak and thought others should not either," said Eber. "But most of the people want to pass on an understanding of the old ways. Pitseolak Ashoona [artist] said to me, 'After I am dead, the book will be there, so that they will know it was not all a myth.' People like her believe they are doing something worthwhile — recording the stories."

Dorothy Harley Eber's new book, *Encounters on the Passage: Inuit Meet the Explorers*, was published by University of Toronto Press in 2008.

Christopher Moore comments in every issue of *The Beaver*.

ENCOUNTERS
ON THE PASSAGE
Inuit Meet the Explorers

by Dorothy Harley Eber



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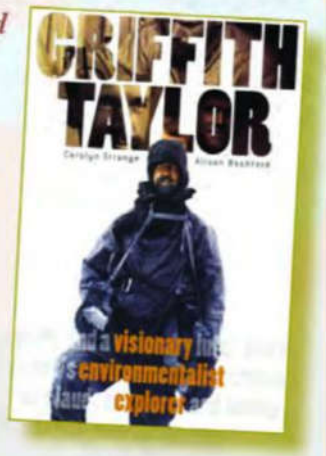

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News from Canada's National History Society

History Matters

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Canada's National History Society
publisher of **The Beaver** *Canada's History Magazine* and **Kayak** *Canada's History Magazine for Kids*

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Founded in 1994 to popularize Canadian history, the work of Canada's National History Society includes: **The Beaver**, **Kayak**, the **Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History** to honour the country's best history teachers, and the **Pierre Berton Award** to recognize those who have brought history to a wider audience.

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The Beaver was founded in 1920 by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose commitment to the History Society and its programs continues today through the ***Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation***.

Crowds gathered at the National War Memorial in Ottawa in November to view the names of Canada's WWI war dead, which were projected on the memorial as part of the Vigil Project. The project was a partnership between designer Martin Conboy, actor R.H. Thomson, and the History Society.

Historic achievements

History Society celebrates excellence in Canadian history

February always signals the beginning of a new year at the History Society. As we close out the subscription sales and set the editorial calendars for our magazines, the History Society then turns its attention to finalizing its annual education and outreach projects aimed at generating greater popular interest in Canadian history. It is also a natural time in the calendar year to celebrate achievements in history, since the month is filled with winter festivals and commemorative events such as Heritage Day (February 16), National Flag of Canada Day (February 15), Citizenship Week, and Black History Month.

In this spirit we present a collection of images captured from some our own fall commemorative events and achievements, including the ceremonies to honour the recipients of our Governor

From right to left, Martin Conboy, R.H. Thomson, Governor General Michaëlle Jean, History Society President Deborah Morrison and Bernard St. Laurent attend the opening of the Vigil Project in Ottawa.

The winner of the 2008 Pierre Berton Award was the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History Project. The team behind the project was honoured last fall at a special Pierre Berton gala night in Toronto. From left, project members Ruth Sandwell, Peter Gossage, and John Lutz pose with Peter Berton and History Society Chair Doug Barrington.

the 68,000 men and women who died in the war were "brought home" one by one as their names travelled across the ocean and appeared on buildings and war memorials across Canada. The project, held during the week leading up to Remembrance Day, touched many Canadian families in the heart of their communities. It was an honour for the History Society to host this special event, and we are deeply grateful to the many *Beaver* readers who contributed financially to the project.

In a survey of *Beaver* readers conducted last summer, many of you took the time to share your views on where the needs and priorities were greatest. The majority of you stated a preference for continued investment in supporting the teaching of history in our schools, as well as strengthening opportunities for students and their families to connect with the history of their own communities.

And so our plan for the year ahead includes the creation of a dynamic new website that encourages greater communication and collaboration throughout the history community. Our aim is to expand the reach of the considerable efforts that are already underway. We hope you will continue to lend your voice and encouragement to these initiatives.

Heritage and Official Languages Minister James Moore speaks at the Governor General's Awards banquet in Gatineau, Quebec, last fall.

The 2008 Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History were presented in Ottawa last November. Back row: Cathleen Anne Tenning, Bev Milobar denOuden, Joe Stafford, and Mike Ward. Front row: Nancy Hamer–Strahl, History Society Chair Doug Barrington, Governor General Michaëlle Jean, History Society President and CEO Deorah Morrison, and Jean–Pierre Frigon.

General's Awards for Teachers and the Pierre Berton Award recipients named for their excellence in bringing history to life in popular media.

Last year, the History Society also formed new partnerships to present Vigil 1914-1918 Vigile, a special project held on the ninetieth anniversary of the Armistice to remember the Canadians who died during the Great War. Beginning in London, England, on November 4, with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in attendance, each one of

The Beaver's **"10 Photos that Changed Canada" feature showcased the work of several photographers, including, from left: Rod MacIvor, Shaney Komulainen, Peter Martin, and Doug Ball. Also shown is *Beaver* photo panellist Barry Gray.**

100 photos that changed Canada

The Beaver partners with HarperCollins on book project

First, there was the "10 Photos that Changed Canada," a special feature on Canada's most iconic images, which appeared last summer in *The Beaver* magazine.

Now, *The Beaver* is proud to announce it is expanding the concept into a new book entitled *100 Photos that Changed Canada.*

The magazine is partnering with HarperCollins to produce the coffee-table-style book and has recruited a who's who of the history, literary, and media world to write essays about the 100 iconic photos included in the book.

"We are very happy to be working with HarperCollins on *100 Photos that Changed Canada*," said Mark Reid, editor of *The Beaver.*

"The 10 Photos that Changed Canada magazine feature was a real labour of love for *The Beaver* staff, and to see it transformed into a major book is really a dream come true for all of us," Reid added.

The 100 photos span the breadth of Canada's history and highlight the personalities and moments that transformed our history. Among the more than thirty guest contributors are Peter Mansbridge, host of CBC's *The National,* Don Newman, CBC's senior parliamentary editor, best-selling authors Charlotte Gray, Will Ferguson, Ken McGoogan, and Christopher Moore, and prominent historians Jack Granatstein, Michael Bliss, Desmond Morton, Tina Loo, Brian Young ,and Margaret Conrad.

The book will be available for fall 2009.

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CANADA'S NATIONAL HISTORY SOCIETY PRESENTS

OUR PAST SHAPES OUR FUTURE

The Second National Forum on Canadian History and Citizenship Education

in partnership with the Teacher's Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

Friday, February 13th, 2009
1:30 – 4:00 p.m.
West Block, House of Commons
Ottawa

With special guest speakers:
John Raulston Saul, C.C.
Co-chair for the Institute on Canadian Citizenship

and

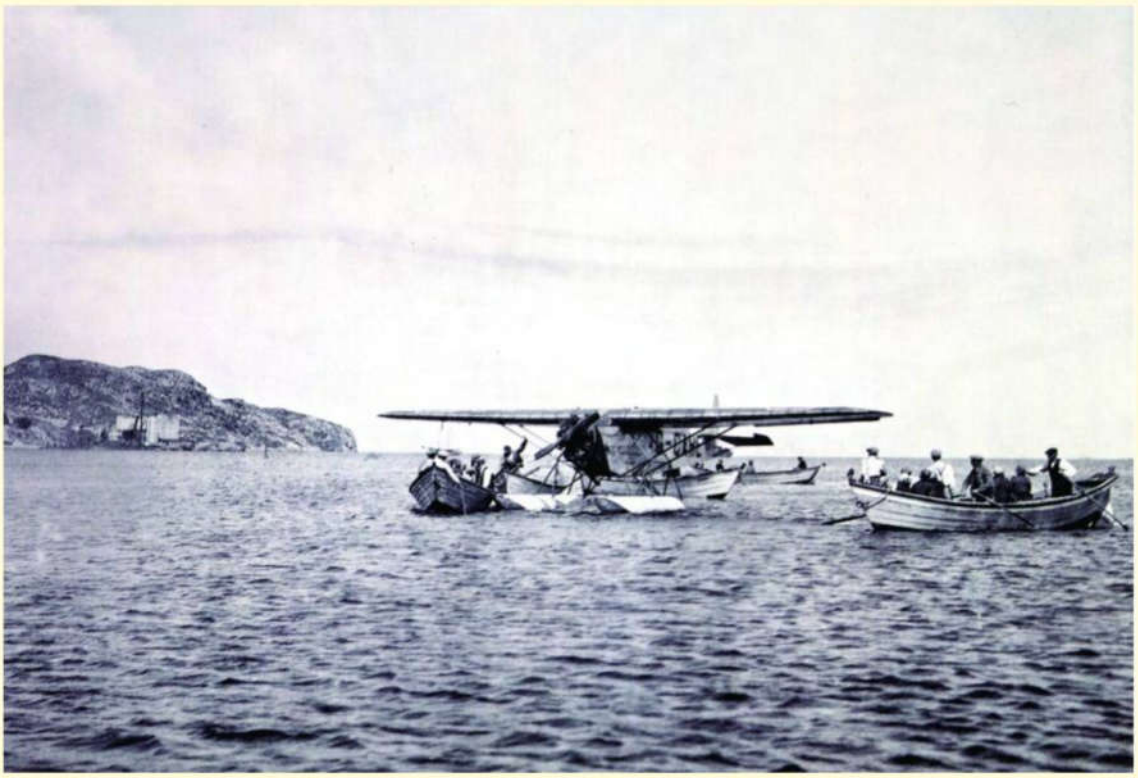
Dr. Peter Seixas, Founding Director for the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness at UBC

Admission is free but guests must be registered to attend.

Call **204-988-9300 ext 10** to reserve your seat.

Album

Robert T. Carter is the son of Morden Carter and resides in Newmarket, Ontario.



A successful aviation first

"All the whistles, bells, horns, and guns were booming a welcome" when the two Canadian flyers shakily stepped from their "renovated relic," a Fokker Universal C-CAHE. Flight engineer Morden Carter and pilot Captain Charles Roy were glad to see land after making the first commercial flight from Sydney, Nova Scotia, to the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The expedition in August 1931 included four days stranded by fog in the Newfoundland fishing port of Burgeo. Their aircraft, formerly used as part of the Hudson Strait Expedition of 1927, ran out of gas directly over the harbour of St. Pierre, necessitating a dead-stick (forced) landing.

"We were soon drifting towards the rocks of Dog Island with a stiff breeze blowing us along in a sea that would have pounded the bottoms of the pontoons full of holes on the rocky shore. With only fifty feet between the floats and whitewater, a line came aboard from a power dory, but it took two of them to tow us across the harbour to the royal reception that awaited us," wrote Carter in his colourful account of the flight.

The expedition took a total of seventeen days. A good part of that time was spent taking part in the welcoming festivities in St. Pierre, where a holiday had been declared for the occasion. Morden's son, Robert Carter, noted the Canadian flyers were impressed by the hospitality extended by the French, and even more impressed by the great warehouses loaded with liquor, ready for smuggling into the prohibition-era United States. The airmen's trip was a success, proving that a two-and-one-half-hour flight could replace the twice-a-month, fifteen-hour boat service.

Morden Carter continued flying throughout the 1930s until marriage and a steadier job necessitated his leaving his aviation career for the insurance business in Toronto. He died in 1990.

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o *The Beaver*, P.O. Box 56060, Portage Place RPO, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0G9. Or email your submission to album@thebeaver.ca. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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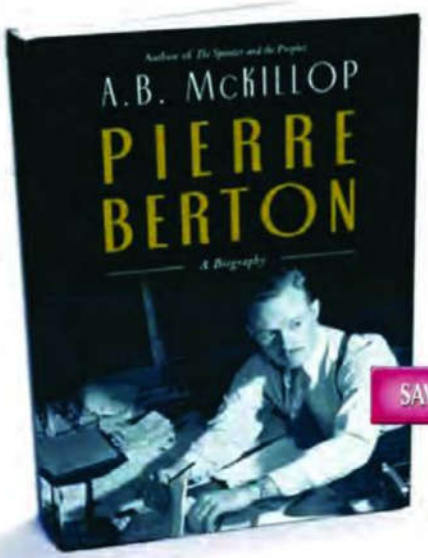

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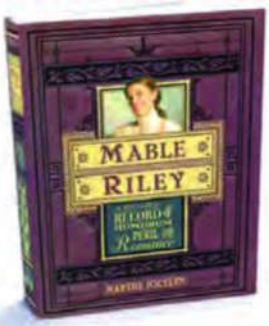

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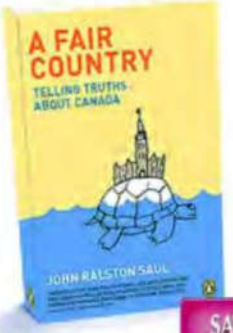

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